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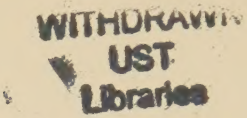

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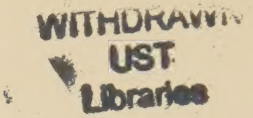

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WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

GRANT OVERTON

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

BY

GRANT OVERTON
AUTHOR OF "THE WOMEN WHO MAKE OUR NOVELS"

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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BY GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET. I

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New York, U. S. A.

FOR

GEORGE H. DORAN

WHO HAD THE IDEA

122699

PREFACE

I have borrowed my title from two remarkable novels.

If Winter Comes, by A. S. M. Hutchinson, was published in the autumn of 1921 by Messrs. Little, Brown & Company of Boston.

Main Street, by Sinclair Lewis, was published in the autumn of 1920 by Messrs. Harcourt, Brace & Company of New York.

I have not before me the precise figures of the amazing sales of these two books—each passed 350,000—but I make my bow to their authors and to their publishers and to the American public. I bow to the authors for the quality of their work and to the publishers and the public for their recognition of that quality.

These two substantial successes confirm my belief that the American public in hundreds of thousands relishes good reading. Without that belief, this book would not have been prepared; but I have prepared it with some confidence that those who relish good reading will be interested in the chapters that follow.

As a former book reviewer and literary editor, as an author and, now, as one vitally concerned

in book publishing, my interest in books has been fundamentally unchanging—a wish to see more books read and better books to read.

From one standpoint, *When Winter Comes to Main Street* is frankly an advertisement; it deals with Doran books and authors. This is a fact of some relevance, however, if, as I believe, the reader shall find well-spent the time given to these pages.

GRANT OVERTON.

19 July 1922.

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WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

Chapter I

THE COURAGE OF HUGH WALPOLE

i

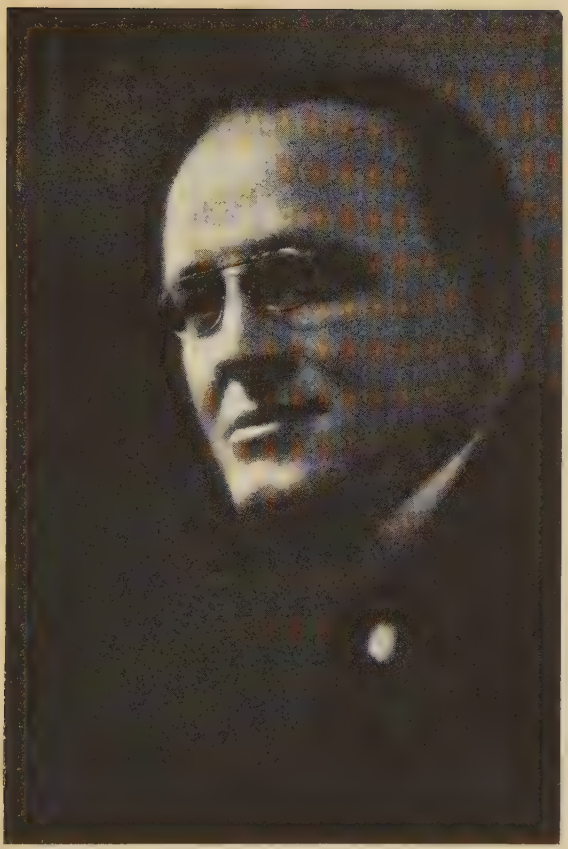
SAYS his American contemporary, Joseph Hergesheimer, in an appreciation of Hugh Walpole: "Mr. Walpole's courage in the face of the widest scepticism is nowhere more daring than in *The Golden Scarecrow*." Mr. Walpole's courage, I shall always hold, is nowhere more apparent than in the choice of his birthplace. He was born in the Antipodes. Yes! In that magical, unpronounceable realm one reads about and intends to look up in the dictionary. . . . The precise Antipodean spot was Auckland, New Zealand, and the year was 1884.

The Right Reverend George Henry Somerset Walpole, D.D., Bishop of Edinburgh since 1910, had been sent in 1882 to Auckland as Incumbent of St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral, and the same ecclesi-

astical fates which took charge of Hugh Seymour Walpole's birthplace provided that, at the age of five, the immature novelist should be transferred to New York. Dr. Walpole spent the next seven years in imparting to students of the General Theological Seminary, New York, their knowledge of Dogmatic Theology. Hugh Seymour Walpole spent the seven years in attaining the age of twelve.

Then, in 1896, the family returned to England. Perhaps a tendency to travel had by this time become implanted in Hugh, for now, in his late thirties, he is one of the most peripatetic of writers. He is here, he is there. You write to him in London and receive a reply from Cornwall or the Continent. And, regularly, he comes over to America. Of all the English novelists who have visited this country he is easily the most popular personally on this side. His visit this autumn (1922) will undoubtedly multiply earlier welcomes.

Interest in Walpole the man and Walpole the novelist shows an increasing tendency to become identical. It is all very well to say that the man is one thing, his books are quite another; but suppose the man cannot be separated from his books? The Walpole that loved Cornwall as a lad can't be dissevered from the "Hugh Seymour" of *The Golden Scarecrow;* without his Red Cross service in Russia during the Great War, Walpole could not have written *The Dark Forest;* and I



HUGH WALPOLE

think the new novel he offers us this autumn must owe a good deal to direct reminiscence of such a cathedral town as Durham, to which the family returned when Hugh was twelve.

The Cathedral, as the new book is called, rests the whole of its effect upon just such an edifice as young Hugh was familiar with. The Cathedral of the story stands in Polchester, in the west of England, in the county of Glebeshire—that mythical yet actual county of Walpole's other novels. Like such tales as *The Green Mirror* and *The Duchess of Wrexe*, the aim is threefold—to give a history of a certain group of people and, at the same time, (2) to be a comment on English life, and, beyond that, (3) to offer a philosophy of life itself.

The innermost of the three circles of interest created in this powerful novel—like concentric rings formed by dropping stones in water—concerns the life of Archdeacon Brandon. When the story opens he is ruling Polchester, all its life, religious and civic and social, with an iron rod. A good man, kindly and virtuous and simple, power has been too much for him. In the first chapter a parallel is made between Brandon and a great mediæval ecclesiastic of the Cathedral, the Black Bishop, who came to think of himself as God and who was killed by his enemies. All through the book this parallel is followed.

A certain Canon Ronder arrives to take up a post in the Cathedral. The main thread of the

novel now emerges as the history of the rivalry of these two men, one simple and elemental, the other calculating, selfish and sure. Ronder sees at once that Brandon is in his way and at once begins his work to overthrow the Archdeacon, not because he dislikes him at all (he *likes* him), but because he wants his place; too, because Brandon represents the Victorian church, while Ronder is on the side of the modernists.

Brandon is threatened through his son Stephen and through his wife. His source of strength,—a source of which he is unaware—lies in his daughter, Joan, a charming girl just growing up. The first part of the novel ends with everything that is to follow implicit in what has been told; the story centres in Brandon but more sharply in the Cathedral, which is depicted as a living organism with all its great history behind it working quickly, ceaselessly, for its own purposes. Every part of the Cathedral life is brought in to effect this, the Bishop, the Dean, the Canons—down to the Verger's smallest child. All the town life also is brought in, from the Cathedral on the hill to the mysterious little riverside inn. Behind the town is seen the Glebeshire country, behind that, England; behind England, the world, all moving toward set purposes.

The four parts of the novel markedly resemble, in structure, acts of a play; in particular, the striking third part, entirely concerned with the events of a week and full of flashing pictures, such as the

scene of the Town Ball. But the culmination of this part, indeed, the climax of the whole book, comes in the scene of the Fair, with its atmosphere of carnival, its delirium of outdoor mood, and its tremendous encounter between Brandon and his wife. The novel closes upon a moment both fugitive and eternal—Brandon watching across the fields the Cathedral, lovely and powerful, in the evening distance. The Cathedral, lovely and powerful, forever victorious, served by the generations of men. . . .

ii

Courage, for Hugh, must have made its demand to be exercised early. We have the "Hugh Seymour" of *The Golden Scarecrow* who "was sent from Ceylon, where his parents lived, to be educated in England. His relations having for the most part settled in foreign countries, he spent his holidays as a minute and pale-faced 'paying guest' in various houses where other children were of more importance than he, or where children as a race were of no importance at all." It would be a mistake to confer on such a fictional passage a strict autobiographical importance; but I think it significant that the novel with which Walpole first won an American following, *Fortitude*, should derive from a theme as simple and as strong as that of a classic symphony—from those

words with which it opens: "'T isn't life that matters! 'T is the courage you bring to it." From that moment on, the novel follows the struggle of Peter Westcott, in boyhood and young manhood, with antagonists, inner and outer. At the end we have him partly defeated, wholly triumphant, still fighting, still pledged to fight.

Not to confuse fiction with fact: Hugh Walpole was educated at Kings School, Canterbury, and at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. When he left the university he drifted into newspaper work in London. He also had a brief experience as master in a boys' school (the experiential-imaginative source of *The Gods and Mr. Perrin*, that superb novel of underpaid teachers in a second-rate boarding school). The war brought Red Cross work in Russia and also a mission to Petrograd to promote pro-Ally sentiment. For these services Walpole was decorated with the Georgian Medal.

What is Hugh Walpole like personally? Arnold Bennett, in an article which appeared in the Book News Monthly and which was reprinted in a booklet, says: "About the time of the publication of *The Gods and Mr. Perrin*, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Walpole and found a man of youthful appearance, rather dark, with a spacious forehead, a very highly sensitised nervous organisation, and that reassuring matter-of-factness of demeanour which one usually does find in an expert. He was then busy at his task of seeing

life in London. He seems to give about one-third of the year to the tasting of all the heterogeneous sensations which London can provide for the connoisseur and two-thirds to the exercise of his vocation in some withdrawn spot in Cornwall that nobody save a postman or so, and Mr. Walpole, has ever beheld. During one month it is impossible to 'go out' in London without meeting Mr. Walpole—and then for a long period he is a mere legend of dinner tables. He returns to the dinner tables with a novel complete."

In the same magazine, in an article reprinted in the same booklet, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, that excellent weaver of mystery stories and sister of Hilaire Belloc, said: "Before all things Hugh Walpole is an optimist, with a great love for and a great belief in human nature. His outlook is essentially sane, essentially normal. He has had his reverses and difficulties, living in lodgings in remote Chelsea, depending entirely upon his own efforts. Tall and strongly built, clean-shaven, with a wide, high forehead and kindly sympathetic expression, the author of *Fortitude* has a refreshing boyishness and zest for enjoyment which are pleasant to his close friends. London, the home of his adoption, Cornwall, the home of his youth, have each an equal spell for him and he divides his year roughly into two parts: the tiny fishing town of Polperro, Cornwall, and the pleasure of friendships in London. 'What a wonderful day!' he was heard to say, his voice sounding

muffled through the thickest variety of a pea-soup fog. 'It wouldn't really be London without an occasional day like this! I'm off to tramp the city.' It is one of Hugh Walpole's superstitions that he should always begin his novels on Christmas Eve. He has always done so, and he believes it brings him luck. Often it means the exercise of no small measure of self-control, for the story has matured in his mind and he is aching to commence it. But he vigorously adheres to his custom, and by the time he begins to write his book lies before him like a map. 'I could tell it you now, practically in the very words in which I shall write it,' he has said. Nevertheless, he takes infinite trouble with the work as it progresses. A great reader, Hugh Walpole reads with method. Tracts of history, periods of fiction and poetry, are studied seriously; and he has a really exhaustive heritage of modern poetry and fiction."

Perhaps since Mrs. Lowndes wrote those words, Mr. Walpole has departed from his Christmas Eve custom. At any rate, I notice on the last page in his very long novel *The Captives* (the work by which, I think, he sets most store of all his books so far published) the dates:

POLPERRO, JAN. 1916,
POLPERRO, MAY 1920.

iii

The demand for the exercise of that courage of which we have spoken can be seen from these further details, supplied by Arnold Bennett:

"At the age of twenty, as an undergraduate of Cambridge, Walpole wrote two novels. One of these, a very long book, the author had the imprudence to destroy. The other was *The Wooden Horse*, his first printed novel. It is not to be presumed that *The Wooden Horse* was published at once. For years it waited in manuscript until Walpole had become a master in a certain provincial school in England. There he showed the novel to a fellow-master, who, having kept the novel for a period, spoke thus: 'I have tried to read your novel, Walpole, but I can't. Whatever else you may be fitted for, you aren't fitted to be a novelist.' Mr. Walpole was grieved. Perhaps he was unaware, then, that a similar experience had happened to Joseph Conrad. I am unable to judge the schoolmaster's fitness to be a critic, because I have not read *The Wooden Horse*. Walpole once promised to send me a copy so that I might come to some conclusion as to the schoolmaster, but he did not send it. Soon after this deplorable incident, Walpole met Charles Marriott, a novelist of a remarkable distinction. Mr. Marriott did not agree with the schoolmaster as to *The Wooden Horse*. The result of the conflict of opinion between Mr. Mar-

riott and the schoolmaster was that Mr. Walpole left the school abruptly—perhaps without the approval of his family, but certainly with a sum of £30 which he had saved. His destination was London.

"In Chelsea he took a room at four shillings a week. He was twenty-three and (in theory) a professional author at last. Through the favouring influence of Mr. Marriott he obtained a temporary job on the London Standard as a critic of fiction. It lasted three weeks. Then he got a regular situation on the same paper, a situation which I think he kept for several years. *The Wooden Horse* was published by a historic firm. Statistics are interesting and valuable—*The Wooden Horse* sold seven hundred copies. The author's profits therefrom were less than the cost of typewriting the novel. History is constantly repeating itself.

"Mr. Walpole was quite incurable, and he kept on writing novels. *Maradick at Forty* was the next one. It sold eleven hundred copies, but with no greater net monetary profit to the author than the first one. He made, however, a more shining profit of glory. *Maradick at Forty*—as the phrase runs—'attracted attention.' I myself, though in a foreign country, heard of it, and registered the name of Hugh Walpole as one whose progress must be watched."

iv

Not so long ago there was published in England, in a series of pocket-sized books called the *Kings Treasuries of Literature* (under the general editorship of Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch), a small volume called *A Hugh Walpole Anthology*. This consisted of selections from Mr. Walpole's novels up to and including *The Captives*. The selection was made by Mr. Walpole himself.

I think that the six divisions into which the selections fell are interesting as giving, in a few words, a prospectus of Walpole's work. The titles of the sections were "Some Children," "Men and Women," "Some Incidents," "London," "Country Places," and "Russia." The excerpts under the heading "Some Children" are all from *Jeremy* and *The Golden Scarecrow*. The "Men and Women" are Mr. Perrin and Mrs. Comber, from *The Gods and Mr. Perrin;* Mr. Trenchard and Aunt Aggie, from *The Green Mirror;* and Mr. Crashaw, from *The Captives*. The "Incidents" are chosen with an equal felicity—we have the theft of an umbrella from *The Gods and Mr. Perrin* and, out of the same book, the whole passage in which Mr. Perrin sees double. There is also a scene from *Fortitude*, "After Defeat." After two episodes from *The Green Mirror*, this portion of the anthology is closed with the tragic passage from *The Captives* in which Maggie finds her uncle.

Among the London places pictured by Mr. Walpole in his novels and in this pleasant anthology are Fleet Street, Chelsea, Portland Place, The Strand, and Marble Arch. The selections under the heading "Country Places" are bits about a cove, the sea, dusk, a fire and homecoming. The passages that relate to Russia are taken, of course, from *The Dark Forest* and *The Secret City*.

Not the least interesting thing in this small volume is a short introductory note by Joseph Conrad, who speaks of the anthology as "intelligently compiled," and as offering, within its limits, a sample of literary shade for every reader's sympathy. "Sophistication," adds Mr. Conrad, "is the only shade that does not exist in Mr. Walpole's prose." He goes on:

"Of the general soundness of Mr. Walpole's work I am perfectly convinced. Let no modern and malicious mind take this declaration for a left-handed compliment. Mr. Walpole's soundness is not of conventions but of convictions; and even as to these, let no one suppose that Mr. Walpole's convictions are old-fashioned. He is distinctly a man of his time; and it is just because of that modernity, informed by a sane judgment of urgent problems and wide and deep sympathy with all mankind, that we look forward hopefully to the growth and increased importance of his work. In his style, so level, so consistent, Mr. Hugh Walpole does not seek so much for novel as for individual expression; and this search, this

ambition so natural to an artist, is often rewarded by success. Old and young interest him alike and he treats both with a sure touch and in the kindest manner. In each of these passages we see Mr. Walpole grappling with the truth of things spiritual and material with his characteristic earnestness, and in the whole we can discern the characteristics of this acute and sympathetic explorer of human nature: His love of adventure and the serious audacity he brings to the task of recording the changes of human fate and the moments of human emotion, in the quiet backwaters or in the tumultuous open streams of existence."

V

There is not space here to reprint all of Joseph Hergesheimer's Appreciation of Hugh Walpole, published in a booklet in 1919—a booklet still obtainable—but I would like to quote a few sentences from the close of Mr. Hergesheimer's essay, where he says:

"As a whole, Hugh Walpole's novels maintain an impressive unity of expression; they are the distinguished presentation of a distinguished mind. Singly and in a group, they hold possibilities of infinite development. This, it seems to me, is most clearly marked in their superiority to the cheap materialism that has been the insistent note of the prevailing optimistic fiction. There is a great deal of happiness in Mr. Walpole's

pages, but it is not founded on surface vulgarity of appetite. The drama of his books is not sapped by the automatic security of invulnerable heroics. Accidents happen, tragic and humorous; the life of his novels is checked in black and white, often shrouded in grey; the sun moves and stars come out; youth grows old; charm fades; girls may or may not be pretty; his old women——

"But there he is inimitable. The old gentlewomen, or caretakers, dry and twisted, brittle and sharp, repositories of emotion—vanities and malice and self-seeking—like echoes of the past, or fat and loquacious, with alcoholic sentimentality, are wonderfully ingratiating. They gather like shadows, ghosts, about the feet of the young, and provide Mr. Walpole with one of his main resources—the restless turning away of the young from the conventions, prejudices and inhibitions of yesterday. He is singularly intent upon the injustice of locking age about the wrists of youth; and, with him, youth is very apt to escape, to defy authority set in years . . . only to become, in time, age itself."

Perhaps this is an anti-climax: The University of Edinburgh has twice awarded the Tait Black Prize for the best novel of the year to Mr. Walpole—first for *The Secret City* in 1919 and then for *The Captives* in 1920.

Books

by Hugh Walpole

Novels:

THE WOODEN HORSE
THE GODS AND MR. PERRIN
(In England, MR. PERRIN AND MR. TRAILL)
THE GREEN MIRROR
THE DARK FOREST
THE SECRET CITY
THE CAPTIVES
THE CATHEDRAL

Romances:

MARADICK AT FORTY
THE PRELUDE TO ADVENTURE
FORTITUDE
THE DUCHESS OF WREXE
THE YOUNG ENCHANTED

Short Stories:

THE GOLDEN SCARECROW
JEREMY
THE THIRTEEN TRAVELLERS

Belles-Lettres:

JOSEPH CONRAD—*A Critical Study.*

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on Hugh Walpole

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English Literature During the Last Half Century, by J. W. Cunliffe, THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

A Hugh Walpole Anthology, selected by the author. LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS. NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY.

Hugh Walpole, Master Novelist. Pamphlet published by GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY. (Out of print.)

Who's Who [In England].

Chapter II

HALF-SMILES AND GESTURES

i

HALF-SMILES and gestures! There is always a younger generation but it is not always articulate. The war may not have changed the face of the world, but it changed the faces of very many young men. Faces of naïve enthusiasm and an innocent expectancy were not particularly noticeable in the years 1918 to 1922. The sombreness, the abruptness, the savage mood evident in the writings of such men as Barbusse and Siegfried Sassoon were abandoned. Confronted with the riddle of life, spared the enigma of death, the young men have felt nothing more befitting their age and generation than the personal "gesture."

If you ask me what is a gesture, I can't say that I know. It is something felt in the attitude of a person to whom one is talking or whose book one is reading. And the gesture is accompanied, in some of our younger writers, with an expression that is both serious and smiling. These half-smiles are, I take it, youth's comment on the riddle of a continued existence, on the loss of well-

lost illusions, on the uncertainty of all future values. What is there worth trying for? It is not too clear, hence the gesture. What is there worth the expenditure of emotion? It is doubtful; and a half-smile is the best.

Such a writer, busily experimenting in several directions, is Aldous Huxley. This child of 1894, the son of Leonard Huxley (eldest son and biographer of Prof. T. H. Huxley) and Julia Arnold (niece of Martha Arnold and sister of Mrs. Humphry Ward), has with three books of prose built up a considerable and devoted following of American readers. First there was *Limbo*. Then came *Crome Yellow*, and on the heels of that we had the five stories—if you like to call them so—composing *Mortal Coils*. I have seen no comment more penetrating than that of Michael Sadleir, himself the author of a novel of distinction. Sadleir says:

"Already Huxley is the most readable of his generation. He has the allurement of his own inconsistency, and the inconsistency of youth is its questing spirit, and, consequently, its chief claim to respect.

"At present there are several Huxleys—the artificer in words, the amateur of garbage, pierrot lunaire, the cynic in rag-time, the fastidious sensualist. For my part, I believe only in the last, taking that to be the real Huxley and the rest prank, virtuosity, and, most of all, self-consciousness. As the foal will shy at his own shadow, so

Aldous Huxley, nervous by fits at the poise of his own reality, sidesteps with graceful violence into the opposite of himself. There is a beautiful example of this in *Mortal Coils*. Among the stage-directions to his play, 'Permutations Among the Nightingales,' occur the following sentences: 'Sydney Dolphin has a romantic appearance. His two volumes of verse have been recognised by intelligent critics as remarkable. How far they are poetry nobody, least of all Dolphin himself, is certain. They may be merely the ingenious products of a very cultured and elaborate brain.'

"The point is not that these words might be applied to the author himself, but rather that he knows they might, even hopes they will, and has sought to lull his too-ready self-criticism by, so to speak, getting there first and putting down on paper what he imagines others may think or write of him.

"Huxley is a poet and writer of prose. His varied personalities show themselves in both. The artificer in words is almost omnipresent, and God forbid that he ever vanish utterly. The disciple of Laforgue has produced lovely and skilful things, and one is grateful for the study of the French symbolists that instigated the translation of 'L'Apres-midi d'un Faune.' In 'The Walk' the recapture of Laforgue's blend of the exotic and the everyday is astonishingly complete.

"The cynic is as accomplished as the Pierrot and 'Social Amenities,' parts of 'Soles Occidere

et Redire Possunt,' and, in *Limbo*, 'Richard Greenow' (first 100 pages) and 'Happy Families' are syncopated actuality, and the mind jigs an appreciative shoulder, as the body jerks irresistibly to 'Indianola.'

"There remains Huxley the sensualist, a very ardent lover of beauty, but one that shrinks from the sordid preamble of modern gallantry, one that is apprehensive of the inevitable disillusionment. As others have done, as others will do, he finds in imagination the adventure that progress has decreed unseemly.

"The reader who is shocked by 'slabby-bellies,' 'mucus,' 'Priapulids'; the reader who is awed by the paraded learning of 'Splendour by Numbers,' by the deliberate intricacy of 'Beauty,' or the delicate fatigue of 'The Death of Lully' in *Limbo*—these are no audience for an artist. It tickles the author's fancy, stretches his wits, flatters his deviltry to provoke and witness such consternation and such respect. But the process is waste of time, and a writer of Huxley's quality, whatever his youth, has never time to waste."

ii

Readers who have chuckled over *Guinea Girl* or have read with the peculiar delight of discovery *The Pilgrim of a Smile* are astonished to learn that its author is, properly speaking, an engineer. Norman Davey, born in 1888 (Cambridge 1908-

10) is the son of Henry Davey, an engineer of eminence. After taking honours in chemistry and physics, Norman Davey travelled in America (1911), particularly in Virginia and Carolina. Then he went to serve as an apprentice in engineering work in the North of England and to study in the University of Montpellier in France.

His first book was *The Gas Turbine*, published in London and now a classic on its subject. In the four years preceding the war he contributed articles on thermodynamics to scientific papers. It is only honest to add that at the same time he contributed to Punch and Life—chiefly verse.

After the war he had a book of verse published in England and followed it with *The Pilgrim of a Smile*. He has travelled a good deal in Spain, Italy, Sweden, and his hobby is book collecting. This is all very well; and it explains how he could provide the necessary atmosphere for that laughable story of Monte Carlo, *Guinea Girl;* but one is scarcely prepared for *The Pilgrim of a Smile* by those preliminaries in thermodynamics—or in Punch. The story of the man who did not ask the Sphinx for love or fame or money but for the reason of her smile is one of the most intelligible of the gestures characteristic of literature since the war.

iii

The gesture as such is perhaps most definitely recognised in the charming book by John Dos

Passos, *Rosinante to the Road Again.* This, indeed, is the story of a gesture and a quest for it. The gesture is that of Castile, defined in the opening chapter in some memorable words exchanged by Telemachus and his friend Lyæus:

" 'It's the gesture that's so overpowering; don't you feel it in your arms? Something sudden and tremendously muscular.'

" 'When Belmonte turned his back suddenly on the bull and walked away dragging the red cloak on the ground behind him I felt it,' said Lyæus.

" 'That gesture, a yellow flame against maroon and purple cadences . . . an instant swagger of defiance in the midst of a litany to death the all-powerful. That is Spain . . . Castile at any rate.'

" 'Is "swagger" the right word?'

" 'Find a better!'

" 'For the gesture a mediæval knight made when he threw his mailed glove at his enemy's feet or a rose in his lady's window, that a mule-driver makes when he tosses off a glass of aguardiente, that Pastora Imperio makes dancing . . .' "

I do not know whether one should classify *Rosinante* as a book of travel, a book of essays, a book of criticisms. It is all three—an integrated gesture. Certain interspersed chapters purport to relate the wayside conversations of Telemachus and Lyæus—dual phases of the author's personality shall we say?—and the people they meet. The other chapters are acute studies of modern

Spain, with rather special attention to modern Spanish writers. One varies in his admiration between such an essay as that on Miguel de Unamuno and such an unforgettable picture as the vision of Jorge Manrique composing his splendid ode to Death:

"It had been raining. Lights rippled red and orange and yellow and green on the clean paving-stones. A cold wind off the Sierra shrilled through clattering streets. As they walked the other man was telling how this Castilian nobleman, courtier, man-at-arms, had shut himself up when his father, the Master of Santiago, died, and had written this poem, created this tremendous rhythm of death sweeping like a wind over the world. He had never written anything else. They thought of him in the court of his great dust-coloured mansion at Ocaña, where the broad eaves were full of a cooing of pigeons and the wide halls had dark rafters painted with arabesques in vermilion, in a suit of black velvet, writing at a table under a lemon tree. Down the sun-scarred street, in the cathedral that was building in those days, full of a smell of scaffolding and stone dust, there must have stood a tremendous catafalque where lay with his arms around him the Master of Santiago; in the carved seats of the choirs the stout canons intoned an endless growling litany; at the sacristy door, the flare of the candles flashing occasionally on the jewels of his mitre, the bishop fingered his crosier restlessly, asking his

favourite choir-boy from time to time why Don Jorge had not arrived. And messengers must have come running to Don Jorge, telling him the service was at the point of beginning, and he must have waved them away with a grave gesture of a long white hand, while in his mind the distant sound of chanting, the jingle of the silver bit of his roan horse stamping nervously where he was tied to a twined Moorish column, memories of cavalcades filing with braying of trumpets and flutter of crimson damask into conquered towns, of court ladies dancing and the noise of pigeons in the eaves drew together like strings plucked in succession on a guitar into a great wave of rhythm in which his life was sucked away into this one poem in praise of death."

iv

The Column is an American institution. What is meant, of course, is that daily vertical discussion of Things That Have Interested Me by different individuals attached to different papers and having in common only the great gift of being interested in what interests everybody else. Perhaps that is not right, either. Maybe the gift is that of being able to interest everybody else in the things you are interested in. Of all those who write a Column, Heywood Broun is possibly the one whose interests are the most varied. It is precisely this variety which makes his book

Pieces of Hate: and Other Enthusiasms unique as a collection of essays. He will write on one page about the boxing ring, on the next about the theatre, a little farther along about books, farther on yet about politics. He makes excursions into college sports, horse racing and questions of fair play; and the problems of child-rearing are his constant preoccupation.

Consider some of his topics. We have an opening study of the literary masterpiece of E. M. Hull, the novel celebrating the adventures of Miss Diana Mayo and the Sheik Ahmed Ben Hassan. The next chapter deals with Hans Christian Andersen and literary and dramatic critics. Pretty soon we are discussing after-dinner speeches, Babe Ruth and Jack Dempsey. If this is a gesture, all I can say is, it is a pinwheel; and yet Broun writes only about things he knows about. Lest you think from my description that *Pieces of Hate* is a book in a wholly unserious vein, I invite you to read the little story, "Frankincense and Myrrh."

"Once there were three kings in the East and they were wise men. They read the heavens and they saw a certain strange star by which they knew that in a distant land the King of the World was to be born. The star beckoned to them and they made preparations for a long journey.

"From their palaces they gathered rich gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. Great sacks of precious stuffs were loaded upon the backs of

the camels which were to bear them on their journey. Everything was in readiness, but one of the wise men seemed perplexed and would not come at once to join his two companions who were eager and impatient to be on their way in the direction indicated by the star.

"They were old, these two kings, and the other wise man was young. When they asked him he could not tell why he waited. He knew that his treasuries had been ransacked for rich gifts for the King of Kings. It seemed that there was nothing more which he could give, and yet he was not content.

"He made no answer to the old men who shouted to him that the time had come. The camels were impatient and swayed and snarled. The shadows across the desert grew longer. And still the young king sat and thought deeply.

"At length he smiled, and he ordered his servants to open the great treasure sack upon the back of the first of his camels. Then he went into a high chamber to which he had not been since he was a child. He rummaged about and presently came out and approached the caravan. In his hand he carried something which glinted in the sun.

"The kings thought that he bore some new gift more rare and precious than any which they had been able to find in all their treasure rooms. They bent down to see, and even the camel drivers peered from the backs of the great beasts to find

out what it was which gleamed in the sun. They were curious about this last gift for which all the caravan had waited.

"And the young king took a toy from his hand and placed it upon the sand. It was a dog of tin, painted white and speckled with black spots. Great patches of paint had worn away and left the metal clear, and that was why the toy shone in the sun as if it had been silver.

"The youngest of the wise men turned a key in the side of the little black and white dog and then he stepped aside so that the kings and the camel drivers could see. The dog leaped high in the air and turned a somersault. He turned another and another and then fell over upon his side and lay there with a set and painted grin upon his face.

"A child, the son of a camel driver, laughed and clapped his hands, but the kings were stern. They rebuked the youngest of the wise men and he paid no attention but called to his chief servant to make the first of all the camels kneel. Then he picked up the toy of tin and, opening the treasure sack, placed his last gift with his own hands in the mouth of the sack so that it rested safely upon the soft bags of incense.

" 'What folly has seized you?' cried the eldest of the wise men. 'Is this a gift to bear to the King of Kings in the far country?'

"And the young man answered and said: 'For the King of Kings there are gifts of great richness, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

" 'But this,' he said, 'is for the child in Bethlehem!' "

v

Editor of the London Mercury, J. C. Squire has the light touch of the columnist but limits himself somewhat more closely to books and the subjects suggested by them. Very few men living can write about books with more actual and less apparent erudition than Mr. Squire. Born in 1884, educated at Cambridge, an editor of the New Statesman, a poet unsurpassed in the field of parody but a poet who sets more store by his serious verse, Mr. Squire can best be appreciated by those who have just that desultory interest in literature which he himself possesses. I have been looking through his *Books in General, Third Series*, for something quotable, and I declare I cannot lift anything from its setting. It is all of a piece, from the essay on "If One Were Descended from Shakespeare" to the remarks about Ben Jonson, Maeterlinck, Ruskin, Cecil Chesterton and Mr. Kipling's later verse (which I have nowhere seen more sensibly discussed).

Well, perhaps these observations from the chapter "A Terrifying Collection" will give the taste! It appears that an anonymous donor had offered money to the Birmingham Reference Library to pay for the gathering of a complete collection of the war poetry issued in the British Empire.

After some preliminary comment, Mr. Squire concludes:

"If that donor really means business I shall be prepared to supply him with one or two rare and special examples myself. I possess tributes to the English effort written by Portuguese, Japanese and Belgians; and pæans by Englishmen which excel, as regards both simplicity of sentiment and illiteracy of construction, any foreign composition. Birmingham is not noted for very many things. It is, we know, the only large city in the country which remains solidly Tory in election after election. It produced, we know, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Austen Chamberlain. It has, we know, something like a monopoly in the manufacture of the gods in wood and brass to which (in his blindness) the heathen bows down; and there are all sorts of cheap lines in which it can give the whole world points and a beating. But it has not yet got the conspicuous position of Manchester or Liverpool; and one feels that the enterprise of this anonymous donor may help to put it on a level with those towns. For, granted that its librarians take their commission seriously, and its friends give them the utmost assistance in their power, there seems every reason to suppose that within the next year the City of Birmingham will be the proud possessor of the largest mound of villainously bad literature in the English-speaking world. Pilgrims will go to see it who on no other account would have gone to Birmingham; his-

torians will refer to it when endeavouring to prove that their own ages are superior to ours in intelligence; authors will inspect it when seeking the consoling assurance that far, far worse things than they have ever done have got into public libraries and been seriously catalogued. The enterprise, in fact, is likely to be of service to several classes of our fellow-citizens; and it cannot, as far as I am able to see, do harm to any. It should therefore be encouraged, and I recommend anyone who has volumes of war-verse which he wishes to get rid of to send them off at once to the Chief Librarian of Birmingham."

Oh, yes! *Books in General, Third Series*, is by Solomon Eagle. Mr. Squire explains that the pen name Solomon Eagle has no excuse. The original bearer of the name was a poor maniac who, during the Great Plague of London, used to run naked through the streets with a pan of coals of fire on his head crying, "Repent, repent."

Too late I realise my wrongdoing, for what, after all, is *Books in General* as compared to Mr. Squire's *Life and Letters?* As a divertissement, compared to a tone poem; as a curtain-raiser to a three-act play. *Life and Letters*, though not lacking in the lighter touches of Mr. Squire's fancy, contains chapters on Keats, Jane Austen, Anatole France, Walt Whitman, Pope and Rabelais of that more considered character one expects from the editor of the London Mercury. This is not to say that these studies are devoid of humour;

and those chapters in the volume which are in the nature of interludes are among the best Mr. Squire has written. Unfortunately I have left myself no room to quote the incomparable panegyric (in the chapter on "Initials") to the name of John. Read it, if your name is John; you will thank me for bringing it to your attention.

vi

One expects personality in the daughter of Margot Asquith, and the readers of the first book by Princess Antoine Bibesco (Elizabeth Asquith) were not disappointed. The same distinction and the same unusual personality will be found in her new book, *Balloons*. Princess Bibesco's *I Have Only Myself to Blame* consisted of sixteen short stories the most nervously alive and most clearly individualised of feminine gestures. The quality of Princess Bibesco's work, in so far as purely descriptive passages can convey it, may be realised from these portraits of a father and mother which open the story called "Pilgrimage" in *I Have Only Myself to Blame:*

"My father was one of the most brilliant men I have ever known but as he refused to choose any of the ordinary paths of mental activity his name has remained a family name when it should have become more exclusively his own. If anything, my mother's famous beauty cast far more lustre on it than his genius—which preferred to bask

in the sunshine of intimacy or recline indolently in the shady backwaters of privacy and leisure. And yet in a way he was an adventurer—or rather an adventurous scientist. He was often called cynical but that was not true—he was far too dispassionate, too little of a sentimentalist to be tempted by inverted sentimentalism. Above all things he was a collector—a collector of impressions. His psychological bibelots were not for everyone. Some, indeed, lay open in the vitime of his everyday conversation but many more lay hidden in drawers opened only for the elect.

"Undoubtedly, in a way, my mother was one of his masterpieces. Her beauty seemed to be enhanced by every hour and every season. At forty suddenly her hair had gone snow white. The primrose, the daffodil, the flame, the gold, the black, the emerald, the ruby of her youth gave way to grey and silver, pale jade and faint turquoise, shell pink and dim lavender. Her loveliness had shifted. The hours of the day conspired to set her. The hard coat and skirt, the high collar, the small hat, the neat veil of morning, the caressing charmeuse that followed, the trailing chiffon mysteries of her tea-gown, the white velvet or the cloth of silver that launched her triumphantly at night, who was to choose between them? Summer and winter followed suit. Whether you saw her emerging from crisp organdy or clinging crepe de chine, stiff grey astrakan or melting chinchilla always it was the

same. This moment you said to yourself, 'She has reached the climax of her loveliness.'

"My father delighted in perfection. He had discovered it in her and promptly made it his own. I don't know if he ever regretted the unfillable quality of her emptiness. Rather I think it amused him to see the violent passions she inspired, to hear her low thrilling voice weigh down her meaningless murmurs with significance. To many of her victims the very incompleteness of her sentences was a form of divine loyalty. One young poet had described her soul as a fluttering, desperate bird beating its wings on the bars of her marvellous loveliness. At this her lazy smile looked very wise. She thought my father an ideal husband. He was always right about her clothes and after all he was the greatest living expert on her beauty. Obviously he loved her but—well, he didn't love her inconveniently."

vii

There will be some who remember reading a first novel, published several years ago, called *Responsibility*. This was a study from a Samuel Butleresque standpoint of the attitude of a father toward an illegitimate son. At least, that is what it came to in the end; but there were leisurely earlier pages dealing with such subjects as the tiresomeness of Honest Work and the dishonesty of righteous people. Very good they were, too.

James E. Agate was the author of this decidedly interesting piece of fiction. He was not a particularly young man, being in his early forties; but he was a youngish man. He was youngish in the sense that Mr. Wells and Mr. Bennett are youngish, and not in the sense of Sir James Peter Pan Barrie—incapable of growing up. As dramatic critic for the Saturday Review, London, Agate has been much happier than in a former experience on the Cotton Exchange of Manchester, his native city. "Each week," said The Londoner in The Bookman, recently, "he watches over the theatre with an enthusiasm for the drama which must constantly be receiving disagreeable shocks. He is a man full of schemes, so that the title of his new book is distinctly appropriate." That new book is called *Alarums and Excursions.*

"Agate is not peaceable," continues our informant. "He carries his full energy, which is astounding, into each topic that arises. He seizes it. Woe betide the man who dismisses an idol of his. It is not to be done. He will submit to no man, however great that man's prestige may be. He is the bulldog."

Agate is a critic "still vigorous enough and fresh enough to attack and to destroy shams of every kind. This is what Agate does in *Alarums and Excursions.*"

Bright news is it that Agate is writing a new novel "on the Balzacian scale of *Responsibility.*"

viii

It was in 1918, when I was exploring new books for a New York book section, that there came to hand a volume called *Walking-Stick Papers*. Therein I found such stuff as this:

"And so the fish reporter enters upon the last lap of his rounds. Through, perhaps, the narrow, crooked lane of Pine Street he passes, to come out at length upon a scene set for a sea tale. Here would a lad, heir to vast estates in Virginia, be kidnapped and smuggled aboard to be sold a slave in Africa. This is Front Street. A white ship lies at the foot of it. Cranes rise at her side. Tugs, belching smoke, bob beyond. All about are ancient warehouses, redolent of the Thames, with steep roofs and sometimes stairs outside, and with tall shutters, a crescent-shaped hole in each. There is a dealer in weather-vanes. Other things dealt in hereabout are these: Chronometers, 'nautical instruments,' wax guns, cordage and twine, marine paints, cotton wool and waste, turpentine, oils, greases, and rosin. Queer old taverns, public houses, are here, too. Why do not their windows rattle with a 'Yo, ho, ho'?

"There is an old, old house whose business has been fish oil within the memory of men. And here is another. Next, through Water Street, one comes in search of the last word on salt fish. Now the air is filled with gorgeous smell of roasting coffee. Tea, coffee, sugar, rice, spices, bags and

bagging here have their home. And there are haughty bonded warehouses filled with fine liquors. From his white cabin at the top of a venerable structure comes the dean of the salt-fish business. 'Export trade fair,' he says; 'good demand from South America.' "

The whole book was like that. I remember saying and printing:

"If this isn't individualised writing, extremely skilful writing and highly entertaining writing, we would like to know what is."

But what was that in the general chorus of delighted praise that went up all over the country?—and there were persons of discrimination among the laudators of Robert Cortes Holliday. People like James Huneker and Simeon Strunsky, who praised not lightly, were quick to express their admiration of this new essayist.

Four years have gone adding to Holliday's first book volumes in the same class and singularly unmistakeable in their authorship. They are the sort of essays that could not be anonymous once the authorship of one of them was known. We have, now, *Broome Street Straws* and the pocket mirror, *Peeps at People*. We have *Men and Books and Cities* and we have a score of pleasant *Turns About Town*.

Holliday shows no sign of failing us. I think the truth is that he is one of those persons described somewhere by Wilson Follett; I think Follett was trying to convey the quality of

De Morgan. Follett said that with Dickens and De Morgan it was not a question of separate books, singly achieved, but a mere matter of cutting off another liberal length of the rich personality which was Dickens or De Morgan. So, exactly, it seems to me in the case of Holliday. A new book of Holliday's essays is simply another few yards of a personality not precisely matched among contemporary American essayists. Holliday's interests are somewhat broader, more human and perhaps more humane, more varied and closer to the normal human spirit and taste and fancy than are the interests of essayists like Samuel Crothers and Agnes Repplier.

The measure of Holliday as an author is not, of course, bounded by these collections of essays. There is his penetrating study of Booth Tarkington and the fine collected edition of Joyce Kilmer, *Joyce Kilmer; Poems, Essays and Letters With a Memoir by Robert Cortes Holliday.*

ix

A gesture can be very graceful, sometimes. A half-smile can be wistful and worth remembering. That was a pleasant story, almost too slender structurally to be called a novel, by Gilbert W. Gabriel, published in the spring of 1922. *Jiminy* is a tale of the quest of the perfect love story by Benjamin Benvenuto and Jiminy, maker of small rhymes. The author, music critic of The Sun,

New York, had long been known as a newspaper writer and a pinch hitter for Don Marquis, conductor of The Sun's famous column, The Sun Dial, when Don was A. W. O. L.

Chapter III

STEWART EDWARD WHITE AND ADVENTURE

i

"STEWART EDWARD WHITE," says George Gordon in his book *The Men Who Make Our Novels*, "writes out of a vast self-made experience, draws his characters from a wide acquaintance with men, recalls situations and incidents through years of forest tramping, hunting, exploring in Africa and the less visited places of our continent, for the differing occasions of his books. In his boyhood he spent a great part of each year in lumber camps and on the river. He first found print with a series of articles on birds, 'The Birds of Mackinac Island' (he was born in Grand Rapids, March 12, 1873), brought out in pamphlet form by the Ornithologists' Union and since (perforce) referred to as his 'first book.' In the height of the gold rush he set out for the Black Hills, to return East broke and to write *The Claim Jumpers* and *The Westerners*. He followed Roosevelt into Africa, *The Land of Footprints* and of *Simba*. He has, more recently, seen serv-

ice in France as a Major in the U. S. Field Artillery. Though (certainly) no Ishmael, he has for years been a wanderer upon the face of the earth, observant and curious of the arresting and strange —and his novels and short stories mark a journey such as but few have gone upon, a trailing of rainbows, a search for gold beyond the further hills and a finding of those campfires (left behind when Mr. Kipling's *Explorer* crossed the ranges beyond the edge of cultivation) round which the resolute sit to swap lies while the tenderfoot makes a fair —and forced—pretence at belief."

ii

Spring, 1922, having advanced to that stage where one could feel confidence that summer would follow—a confidence one cannot always feel in March—a short letter came from Mr. White. He enclosed two photographs. One of them showed a trim-looking man with eyeglasses and moustache, sitting shirt-sleeved in a frail-looking craft. The letter explained that this was a collapsible canvas boat. My deduction was that the picture had been taken before the boat collapsed.

There was also a picture of another and much sturdier boat. I think the name Seattle was painted on her stern. She lay on a calm surface that stretched off to a background of towering mountains—Lake Louise Inlet. The much stur-

STEWART EDWARD WHITE

dier boat, I understood, was also the property of S. E. White.

The letter made all these things very clear. It said: "Fifteen tons, fifty feet, sleeps five, thirty-seven horsepower, heavy duty engine, built sea-going, speed nine knots. No phonograph! No wine cellar.

"We are going north, that is all the plans we have. We two are all there are on board, though we are thinking of getting a cat. On second thought, here is the crew in the canvas boat we carry to the inland lakes to fish from. Her name is the *Wreckless;* be careful how you spell it."

As stated, the crew in the about-to-collapse boat was Stewart Edward White. On his way north it was his intention to revise what will be, in his judgment, the most important novel he has written. But I must not say anything about that yet. Let me say something, rather, about his new book which you who read this have a more immediate prospect of enjoying. *On Tiptoe: A Romance of the Redwoods* is Stewart Edward White in a somewhat unusual but entirely taking rôle. Here we have Mr. White writing what is essentially a comedy; and yet there is an element of fantasy in the story which, in the light of a few opening and closing paragraphs, can be taken seriously, too.

The story sounds, in an outline, almost baldly implausible. Here are certain people, including a young woman, the daughter of a captain of in-

dustry, stranded in the redwoods. Here is a young man out of nowhere, who foretells the weather in a way that is uncannily verified soon afterward. Here also is the astonishing engine which the young man has brought with him out of nowhere,—an engine likely to revolutionise the affairs of the world. . . .

I suppose that the secret of such a story as *On Tiptoe* lies entirely in the telling. I know that when I heard it outlined, the thing seemed to me to be preposterous. But then, while still under the conviction of this preposterousness, the story itself came to my hand and I began to read. Its preposterousness did not worry me any longer. It had, besides a plausibility more than sufficient, a narrative charm and a whimsical humour that would have justified any tale. The thing that links *On Tiptoe* with Stewart Edward White is the perfect picture of the redwoods—the feeling of all outdoors you get while under the spell of the story. I do not think there is any doubt that all lovers of White will enjoy this venture into the field of light romance.

iii

Stewart Edward White was the son of T. Stewart White and Mary E. (Daniell) White. He received the degree of bachelor of philosophy from the University of Michigan in 1895 and the degree of master of arts from the same institution

in 1903 (*Who's Who in America: Volume 12*). He attended Columbia Law School in 1896-97. He married on April 28, 1904, Elizabeth Grant of Newport, Rhode Island. He was a major with the 144th Field Artillery in 1917-18. He lives in California. But these skeletal details, all right for *Who's Who in America*, serve our purpose poorly. I am going to try to picture the man from two accounts of him written by friends. One appeared as an appendix to White's novel *Gold*, published in 1913, and was written by Eugene F. Saxton. The other is a short newspaper article by John Palmer Gavit (long with the New York Evening Post) printed in the Philadelphia Ledger for May 20, 1922.

Mr. Saxton had a talk with White a few days before White sailed from New York for his second African exploring expedition. Saxton had asked the novelist if he did not think it possible to lay hold of the hearts and imaginations of a great public through a novel which had no love interest in it; if "man pitted against nature was not, after all, the eternal drama."

White thought for a moment and then said:

"In the main, that is correct. Only I should say that the one great drama is that of the individual man's struggles toward perfect adjustment with his environment. According as he comes into correspondence and harmony with his environment, by that much does he succeed. That is what an environment is for. It may be finan-

cial, natural, sexual, political, and so on. The sex element is important, of course,—very important. But it is not the only element by any means; nor is it necessarily an element that exercises an instant influence on the great drama. Any one who so depicts it is violating the truth. Other elements of the great drama are as important—self-preservation, for example, is a very simple and even more important instinct than that of the propagation of the race. Properly presented, these other elements, being essentially vital, are of as much interest to the great public as the relation of the sexes."

The first eight or nine years of Mr. White's life were spent in a small mill town. Michigan was at that time the greatest of lumber states. White was still a boy when the family moved to Grand Rapids, then a city of about 30,000. Stewart Edward White did not go to school until he was sixteen, but then he entered the third year high with boys of his own age and was graduated at eighteen, president of his class. He won and, I believe, still holds the five-mile running record of the school.

The explanation is that the eight or ten years which most boys spend in grammar school were spent by Stewart Edward continually in the woods and among the rivermen, in his own town and in the lumber camps to which his father took him. Then there was a stretch of four years, from about the age of twelve on, when he was in Cali-

fornia, as he says "a very new sort of a place." These days were spent largely in the saddle and he saw a good deal of the old California ranch life.

"The Birds of Mackinac Island," already referred to, was only one of thirty or forty papers on birds which White wrote in his youth for scientific publications. Six or seven hundred skins that he acquired are now preserved in the Kent Scientific Museum of Grand Rapids.

His summer vacations while he was in college were spent cruising the Great Lakes in a 28-foot cutter sloop. After graduating he spent six months in a packing-house at $6 a week. His adventure in the Black Hills gold rush followed.

It was during his studies at Columbia that White wrote, as part of his class work, a story called "A Man and His Dog" which Brander Matthews urged him to try to sell. Short Stories brought it for $15 and subsequent stories sold also. One brought as much as $35!

He tried working in McClurg's bookstore in Chicago at $9 a week. Then he set out for Hudson Bay. *The Claim Jumpers*, finished about this time, was brought out as a book and was well received. The turn or tne tide did not come until Munsey paid $500 for the serial right in *The Westerners*. White was paid in five dollar bills and he says that when he stuffed the money in his pockets he left at once for fear someone would change his mind and want all that money back.

The Blazed Trail was written in a lumber camp in the depth of a northern winter. The only hours White could spare for writing were in the early morning, so he would begin at 4 A. M., and write until 8 A. M., then put on his snowshoes and go out for a day's lumbering. The story finished, he gave it to Jack Boyd, the foreman, to read. Boyd began it after supper one evening and when White awoke the next morning at four o'clock he found the foreman still at it. As Boyd never even read a newspaper, White regarded this as a triumph. This is the book that an Englishwoman, entering a book shop where White happened to be, asked for in these words: "Have you a copy of *Blasé Tales?*"

White went out hastily in order not to overhear her cries of disappointment.

iv

Mr. Saxton asked White why he went to Africa and White said:

"My answer to that is pretty general. I went because I wanted to. About once in so often the wheels get rusty and I have to get up and do something real or else blow up. Africa seemed to me a pretty real thing. Before I went I read at least twenty books about it and yet I got no mental image of what I was going to see. That fact accounts for these books of mine. I have tried to

tell in plain words what an ordinary person would see there.

"Let me add," he went on, "that I did not go for material. I never go anywhere for material; if I did I should not get it. That attitude of mind would give me merely externals, which are not worth writing about. I go places merely because, for one reason or another, they attract me. Then, if it happens that I get close enough to the life, I may later find that I have something to write about. A man rarely writes anything convincing unless he has lived the life; not with his critical faculty alert; but whole-heartedly and because, for the time being, it is his life."

v

John Palmer Gavit tells how once, when hunting, White broke his leg and had to drag himself back long miles to camp alone:

"Adventure enough, you'd say. But along the way a partridge drummed and nothing would do but he must digress a hundred yards from the shorter and sufficiently painful way, brace himself for the shot and recoil, kill the bird and have his dog retrieve it, and bring his game along with him. Just to show himself that this impossible thing could be done.

"I am not imagining when I say that in this same spirit Stewart Edward White faces the deeper problems and speculations of life. He

wants to know about things here and hereafter. With the same zest and simplicity of motive he faces the secret doors of existence; not to prove or disprove, but to see and find out. And when he comes to the Last Door he will go through without fear, with eyes open to see in the next undiscovered country what there is to be seen and to show that the heart of a brave and unshrinking man, truthful and open-handed and friendly, is at home there, as he may be anywhere under God's jurisdiction."

Books

by Stewart Edward White

THE WESTERNERS
THE CLAIM JUMPERS
THE BLAZED TRAIL
CONJUROR'S HOUSE
THE FOREST
THE MAGIC FOREST
THE SILENT PLACES
THE MOUNTAIN
BLAZED TRAIL STORIES
THE PASS
THE MYSTERY (With Samuel Hopkins Adams)
ARIZONA NIGHTS
CAMP AND TRAIL
THE RIVERMAN
THE RULES OF THE GAME
THE CABIN

STEWART EDWARD WHITE

THE ADVENTURES OF BOBBY ORDE
THE LAND OF FOOTPRINTS
AFRICAN CAMP FIRES
GOLD
THE REDISCOVERED COUNTRY
THE GREY DAWN
THE LEOPARD WOMAN
SIMBA
THE FORTY-NINERS (In The Chronicles of America Series)
THE ROSE DAWN
THE KILLER, AND OTHER STORIES
ON TIPTOE: A ROMANCE OF THE REDWOODS

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Who's Who in America.

Stewart Edward White: Appendix to GOLD (published in 1913) by Eugene F. Saxton. DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY.

Stewart Edward White, by John Palmer Gavit. PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEDGER, May 20, 1922.

Chapter IV

WHERE THE PLOT THICKENS

i

SCARCELY anyone is there, now writing mystery stories, who, with the combination of ingenuity—or perhaps I should say originality —dependableness, and a sufficient atmosphere comes up to the high and steady level of Frank L. Packard. Born in Montreal in 1877 of American parents, a graduate of McGill University and a student of Liége, Belgium, Mr. Packard was engaged in engineering work for some years and began writing for a number of magazines in 1906. He now lives at Lachine, Province of Quebec, Canada, and the roll of his books is a considerable one. In that roll, there are titles known and enthusiastically remembered by nearly every reader of the mystery tale. Is there anyone who has not heard of *The Miracle Man* or *The Wire Devils* or Jimmie Dale in *The Adventures of Jimmie Dale* and *The Further Adventures of Jimmie Dale? The Night Operator*, *From Now On*, *Pawned*, and, most recently, *Doors of the Night* have had their public ready and waiting. That same public

will denude the book counters of *Jimmie Dale and The Phantom Clue* this autumn.

Packard differs from his fellow-writers of mystery stories in his flair for the unusual idea. In *Pawned* each character finds himself in pawn to another, and must act as someone else dictates. *Doors of the Night* is the account of a man who was both a notorious leader and hunted prey of New York's underworld. *From Now On* is the unexpected story of a man after he comes out of prison; and Jimmie Dale, Fifth Avenue clubman, was, to Clancy, Smarlinghue the dope fiend; to the gang, Larry the Bat, stool pigeon; but to Headquarters—the Grey Seal!

Stories of the underworld are among the most difficult to write. The thing had, it seemed, been done to death and underdone and overdone when Packard came along. In all seriousness, it may be said that Packard has restored the underworld to respectability—as a domain for fictional purposes at least! It is not that his crooks are real crooks—though they are—but that he is able to put life into them, to make them seem human. No man is a hero to his valet and no crook can be merely a crook in a story of the underworld that is intended to convey any sense of actuality. Beside the distortions and conventionalisations of most underworld stories, Packard's novels stand out with distinctiveness and a persistent vitality.

ii

When a book called *Bulldog Drummond* was published there was no one prescient of the great success of the play which would be made from the story. But those who read mystery stories habitually knew well that a mystery-builder of exceptional adroitness had arrived. Of course, Cyril McNeile, under the pen name "Sapper," was already somewhat known in America by several war books; but *Bulldog Drummond* was a novelty. Apparently it was possible to write a first rate detective-mystery story with touches of crisp humour as good as Pelham Grenville Wodehouse's stuff! There is something convincing about the hero of *Bulldog Drummond*, the brisk and cheerful young man whom demobilisation has left unemployed and whose perfectly natural susceptibility to the attractiveness of a young woman leads him into adventures as desperate as any in No Man's Land.

For Cyril McNeile's new story *The Black Gang*, after the experience of *Bulldog Drummond* as a book and play, Americans will be better prepared. An intermediate book, *The Man in Ratcatcher*, consists of shorter stories which exhibit very perfectly McNeile's gift for the dramatic situation. He gives us the man who returned from the dead to save his sweetheart from destruction; the man who staked his happiness on a half forgotten waltz; the man who played at cards

for his wife; the man who assisted at suicide. Neither ordinary short stories nor ordinary motifs! I should hesitate to predict how far McNeile will go along this special line of his; but I see no reason why he should not give us the successor of Sherlock Holmes.

iii

Black Cæsar's Clan is the good title of Albert Payson Terhune's new story in succession to his *Black Gold*, a mystery story that was distinguished by the possession of a Foreword so unusual as to be worth reprinting—one of the best arguments for this type of book ever penned:

"If you are questing for character-study or for realism or for true literature in any of its forms,—then walk around this book of mine (and, indeed, any book of mine); for it was not written for you and it will have no appeal for you.

"But if you care for a yarn with lots of action, —some of it pretty exciting,—you may like *Black Gold*. I think you will.

"It has all the grand old tricks: from the Weirdly Vanishing Footprints, to the venerable Ride for Life. Yes, and it embalms even the half-forgotten and long-disused Struggle on the Cliff. Its Hero is a hero. Its Villain is a villain. Nobody could possibly mistake either of them for the Friend of the Family. The Heroine is just a heroine; not a human. There is not a subtle

phrase or a disturbingly new thought, from start to finish.

"There is a good mystery, too; along lines which have not been worked over-often. And there is a glimpse of Untold Treasure. What better can you ask; in a story that is frank melodrama?

"The scene, by the way, is laid in Northern California; a beautiful and strikingly individualistic region which, for the most part, is ignored by tourists for the man-made scenic effects and playgrounds of the southern counties of the State.

"If, now and again, my puppets or my plot-wires creak a bit noisily,—what then? Creaking, at worst, is a sure indication of movement,—of action,—of incessant progress of sorts. A thing that creaks is not standing still and gathering mildew. It moves. Otherwise it could not creak.

"Yes, there are worse faults to a plot than an occasional tendency to creakiness. It means, for one thing, that numberless skippable pages are not consumed in photographic description of the ill-assorted furnishings of the heroine's room or cosmos; nor in setting forth the myriad phases of thought undergone by the hero in seeking to check the sway of his pet complexes. (This drearily flippant slur on realism springs from pure envy. I should rejoice to write such a book. But I can't. And, if I could, I know I should never be

able to stay awake long enough to correct its proofs.)

"Yet, there is something to be said in behalf of the man or woman who finds guilty joy in reading a story whose action gallops; a story whose runaway pace breaks its stride only to leap a chasm or for a breathcatching stumble on a precipice-edge. The office boy prefers Captain Kidd to Strindberg; not because he is a boy, but because he is human and has not yet learned the trick of disingenuousness. He is still normal. So is the average grown-up.

"These normal and excitement-loving readers are overwhelmingly in the majority. Witness the fact that *The Bat* had a longer run in New York than have all of Dunsany's and Yeats's rare dramas, put together. If we insist that our country be guided by majority-rule, then why sneer at a majority-report in literary tastes?

"*Ben Hur* was branded as a 'religious dime novel.' Yet it has had fifty times the general vogue of Anatole France's pseudo-blasphemy which deals with the same period. Public taste is not always, necessarily, bad taste. 'The common people heard Him, gladly.' (The Scribes did not.)

"After all, there is nothing especially debasing in a taste for yarns which drip with mystery and suspense and ceaseless action; even if the style and concept of these yarns be grossly lacking in certain approved elements. So the tale be written

with strong evidence of sincerity and with a dash of enthusiasm, why grudge it a small place of its own in readers' hours of mental laziness?

"With this shambling apology,—which, really, is no apology at all,—I lay my book on your knees. You may like it or you may not. You will find it alive with flaws. But, it is alive.

"I don't think it will bore you. Perhaps there are worse recommendations."

iv

Hulbert Footner does not look like a writer of mystery stories. A tall, handsome, well-dressed, extremely courteous gentleman who, had he the requisite accent, might just have arrived from Bond Street. He has a trim moustache. Awfully attractive blue eyes! He lives on a farm at Sollers, Maryland. No one else, it seems, is so familiar with the unusual corners of New York City, the sort of places that get themselves called "quaint." No one else manages the affairs of young lovers (on paper) with quite so much of the airy spirit of young love. I can think of no one else who could write such a scene as that in *The Owl Taxi*, where the dead-wagon, on its way in the night to the vast cemetery in a New York suburb, is held up for the removal of a much-needed corpse. Such material is bizarre. The handling of it must be very deft or the result will be revolting; and yet the thing can be done.

In the latter part of that excellent play, *Seven Keys to Baldpate*, George M. Cohan and his company bandied a corpse from attic to cellar of a country house. This preposterous scene as presented on the stage was helplessly laughable. Mr. Footner's scene in *The Owl Taxi* is like that.

The man has a special gift for the picturesque person. I do not know whether he uses originals; if I suspect an original for old Simon Deaves in *The Deaves Affair*, I get no farther than a faint suspicion that . . . No, I cannot identify his character. (Not that I want to; I am not a victim of that fatal obsession which fastens itself upon so many readers of fiction—the desire to identify the characters in a story with someone in real life. The idea is ridiculous.) Mr. Footner knows Greenwich Village. He knows outlying stretches in the greater city of New York; he knows excursion boats such as the Ernestina, whose cruises play so curious a part in *The Deaves Affair*. I have a whetted appetite for what Footner will give us next; I feel sure it will be like no other story of the season. A great deal to be sure of!

v

The peculiarity about *Gold-Killer* is the mystery behind the excellent mystery of the book. I mean, of course, the mystery of its authorship. I do not any longer believe that the book is the work of Siamese twins—in a physiological sense of the

word "twins." I know that there is no John Prosper—or, rather, that if there is a John Prosper, he is not the author of *Gold-Killer*. Yet the book was the work of more than one man. Were two intellects siamesed to write the story? Those who, in my opinion, know the facts point to the name on the title page and say that John is John and Prosper is Prosper and never the twain shall meet, unless for the purpose of evolving a super-*Gold-Killer*. Whether they will be able to surpass this book, which opens with a murder at the opera and finishes (practically) with a nose dive in an airplane, is beyond my surmise.

If they will try, I give them my word I will read the new yarn.

Mrs. Baillie Reynolds's latest novel is called *The Judgment of Charis*. It is not a story to tell too much about in advance. I will say that Charis had run away from an all-too-persistent lover and an all-too-gorgeous family, and had been taken under the wing of a kindly, middle-aged millionaire and invited to become his secretary. She expected some complications and in her expectations she was not disappointed; and the readers' expectations will not be disappointed either, though they may find the ending unexpected.

The Vanishing of Betty Varian restored to readers of Carolyn Wells a detective whose appearance in *The Room with the Tassels* made that story more than ordinarily worth while. I do not

know, though, whether Penny Wise would be interesting or even notable if it were not for his curious assistant, Zizi. The merit of detective stories is necessarily variable; *The Vanishing of Betty Varian* is one of the author's best; but Miss Wells (really Mrs. Hadwin Houghton) is, to me, as extraordinary as her stories. All those books! She herself says that "having mastered the psychology of detachment" she can write with more concentration and less revision than any other professional writer of her acquaintance. Yes, but how—— No doubt it is too much to expect her to explain *how* she is ingenious.

Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, sister of Hilaire Belloc, is ingenious in a different direction. Her story of *What Timmy Did* was one that attracted especial attention from those periodicals and persons interested in psychic matters. Here was a woman whose husband had died from poison—self-administered, the coroner decided—and here was little Timmy, who knew that something was wrong. Animals also knew it; and then one day Timmy saw at her heels a shadow man, stiff and military, and behind him a phantom dog. Mrs. Lowndes's gifts, different from her distinguished brother's, are none the less gifts.

Chapter V

REBECCA WEST: AN ARTIST

i

WHETHER Rebecca West is writing reviews of books or dramatic criticism or novels she is an artist, above everything. I have been reading delightedly the pages of her new novel, *The Judge*. It is Miss West's second novel. One is somewhat prepared for it by the excellence of her first, *The Return of the Soldier*, published in 1918. Somewhat, but not adequately.

Perhaps I am prejudiced. You see, I have been in Edinburgh, and though it was the worst season of the year—the period when, as Robert Louis Stevenson says, that Northern city has "the vilest climate under Heaven"—nevertheless, the charm and dignity of that old town captured me at the very moment when a penetrating Scotch winter rain was coming in direct contact with my bones. I was, I might as well confess, soaked and chilled as no New York winter snowstorm ever wetted and chilled me. It did not matter; here was the long sweep of Princes Street with its gay shops on one side and its deep valley on the other; across

REBECCA WEST

the valley the tenements of the Royal Mile lifted themselves up—the Royal Mile, which runs always uphill from the Palace that is Holyrood to the height that is the Castle. Talk about gestures! The whole city of Edinburgh is a matchless gesture.

And so, when I began the first page of *The Judge*, it was a grand delight to find myself back in the city of the East Wind:

"It was not because life was not good enough that Ellen Melville was crying as she sat by the window. The world, indeed, even so much of it as could be seen from her window, was extravagantly beautiful. The office of Mr. Mactavish James, Writer to the Signet, was in one of those decent grey streets that lie high on the Northward slope of Edinburgh New Town, and Ellen was looking up the sidestreet that opened just opposite and revealed, menacing as the rattle of spears, the black rock and bastions of the Castle against the white beamless glare of the southern sky. And it was the hour of the clear Edinburgh twilight, that strange time when the world seems to have forgotten the sun though it keeps its colour; it could still be seen that the moss between the cobblestones was a wet bright green, and that a red autumn had been busy with the wind-nipped trees, yet these things were not gay, but cold and remote as brightness might be on the bed of a deep stream, fathoms beneath the visitation of the sun. At this time all the town was ghostly, and

she loved it so. She took her mind by the arm and marched it up and down among the sights of Edinburgh, telling it that to be weeping with discontent in such a place was a scandalous turning up of the nose at good mercies. Now the Castle Esplanade, that all day had proudly supported the harsh virile sounds and colours of the drilling regiments, would show to the slums its blank surface, bleached bonewhite by the winds that raced above the city smoke. Now the Cowgate and the Canongate would be given over to the drama of the disorderly night, the slumdwellers would foregather about the rotting doors of dead men's mansions and brawl among the not less brawling ghosts of a past that here never speaks of peace, but only of blood and argument. And Holyrood, under a black bank surmounted by a low bitten cliff, would lie like the camp of an invading and terrified army. . . ."

ii

The Judge is certainly autobiographical in some of the material employed. For instance, it is a fact that Miss West went to school in Edinburgh, attending an institution not unlike John Thompson's Ladies College referred to in *The Judge* (but only referred to). It is a fact, as everyone who knows anything about Miss West knows, that Miss West was an ardent suffragette in that time before suffragettes had ceased from troubling

and Prime Ministers were at rest. An amazing legend got about some time ago that Rebecca West's real name was Regina Miriam Bloch. Then on the strength of the erring "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature" did Miss Amy Wellington write a sprightly article for the Literary Review of the New York Evening Post. Miss Wellington referred to this mysterious Regina Miriam Bloch who had stunned everybody by her early articles written under the name of one of Ibsen's most formidable heroines; but unfortunately Miss West wrote a letter in disclaimer. She cannot help Mr. Ibsen. It may be a collision in names, but it is not a collusion. The truth about Rebecca West, who has written *The Judge*, seems to be dependably derivable from the English *Who's Who*, a standard work always worth consulting. This estimable authority says that Rebecca West was born on Christmas in 1892, and is the youngest daughter of the late Charles Fairfield of County Kerry. It further says that she was educated at George Watson's Ladies' College, Edinburgh. It states that she joined the staff of The Freewoman as a reviewer in 1911. Her club is the International Women's Franchise. Her residence is 36 Queen's Gate Terrace, London S. W. 7. Her telephone is Kensington 7285.

Now is there anything mythical left? What excuse, O everybody, is there any longer for the legend of Regina Miriam Bloch?

But I do not believe Miss West objects to leg-

ends. I imagine she loves them. The legend of a name is perhaps unimportant; the legend of a personality is of the highest importance. That Miss West has a personality is evident to anyone familiar with her work. A personality, however, is not three-dimensionally revealed except in that form of work which comes closest to the heart and life of the worker. To write pungent and terrifyingly sane criticisms is a notable thing; but to write novels of tender insight and intimate revelation is a far more convincing thing. *The Judge* is such a novel.

iii

There is a prefatory sentence, as follows:

"Every mother is a Judge who sentences the children for the sins of the father."

There is a dedication. It is:

TO THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER

The Judge is a study of the claim of a mother upon her son. The circumstances of Mrs. Yaverland's life were such as peculiarly to strengthen the tie between her and Richard. On the other hand, she had always disliked and even hated her son Roger.

The first part of the book, however, does not bring in Richard Yaverland's mother. It is a picture of Ellen Melville, the girl in Edinburgh, the

girl whose craving for the colour of existence has gone unsatisfied until Richard Yaverland enters her life. Yaverland, with his stories of Spain, and his imaginative appeal for that young girl, is the fulcrum of Ellen Melville's destiny.

That destiny, carried by the forces of human character to its strange termination, is handled by Miss West in a long novel the chapters of which are a series of delineative emotions. I do not mean that Miss West shrinks from externalised action, as did Henry James whom she has admired and studied. She perceives the immense value of introspection, but is not lost in its quicksands. She can devote a whole chapter to a train of thought in the mind of Ellen Melville, sitting inattentively at a public meeting; and she can follow it with another long chapter giving the sequence of thoughts in the mind of Richard Yaverland; and she can bring each chapter to a period with the words: "She (he) glanced across the hall. Their eyes met." It might be thought that this constitutes a waste of narrative space; not so. As a matter of fact, without the insight accorded by these disclosures of things thought and felt, we should be unable to understand the behaviour of these two young people.

All the first half of the book is a truly marvelous story of young lovers; all the latter end of the book is a relation scarcely paralleled in fiction of the conflict between the mother's claim and the claim of the younger woman.

Of subsidiary portraits there are plenty. Ellen's mother and Mr. Mactavish James and Mr. Philip James are like full-lengths by Velasquez. In the closing chapters of the book we have the extraordinary figure of the brother and son, Roger, accompanied by the depressing girl whom he has picked up the Lord knows where.

And, after all, this is not a first novel—that promise, which so often fails of fulfilment—but a second novel; and I have in many a day not read anything that seemed to me to get deeper into the secrets of life than this study of a man who, at the last, spoke triumphantly, "as if he had found a hidden staircase out of destiny," and a woman who, at the last, "knew that though life at its beginning was lovely as a corn of wheat it was ground down to flour that must make bitter bread between two human tendencies, the insane sexual caprice of men, the not less mad excessive steadfastness of women."

Books

by Rebecca West

THE RETURN OF THE SOLDIER
THE JUDGE

Sources on Rebecca West

Who's Who. [In England].

Rebecca West: Article by Amy Wellington in the LITERARY REVIEW OF THE NEW YORK EVENING POST, 1921.

Articles by Rebecca West in various English publications, frequently reprinted by THE LIVING AGE. See the READERS' GUIDE TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

Chapter VI

SHAMELESS FUN

i

ONE way to write about Nina Wilcox Putnam would be in the way she writes about everything. It's not so hard. As thus:

Some dull day in the office. We look up and whom should we see standing right there before us but Nina Wilcox Putnam! Falling over backwards, that being what our swivel chair is made for, we say: "Well, well, well! So today is May 3, 1922! Where from? West Broadway?"

"I should not say so! South Broadway, I guess. I've just motored up from Florida. But your speaking of West Broadway reminds me: I've written a piece for George Lorimer of Saturday Evening Post. You see my book, *West Broadway*, brought me so many letters my arm ached from answering them. What car did you drive? Where d'y' get gas in the desert? What's the best route? And thus et cetera. So now I have wrote me a slender essay answering everything that anybody can ask on this or other transcontinental subjects. Mr. Lorimer will publish,

and who knows—as they say in fiction—it might make a book afterward."

"How's Florida?"

"I left it fine, if it doesn't get in trouble while I'm away. I've bought a ranch, for fruit only, on the East Coast, between Palm Beach and Miami, but not paying these expensive prices, no, not never. And I shall live there for better but not for worse, for richer, but most positively not for poorer. I pick my own alligator pears off my own tree unless I want to sell them for fifteen cents on the tree. Bathing, one-half mile east by motor."

"Been reading your piece, 'How I Have Got So Far So Good,' in John Siddall's American Magazine."

"Yes, I thought I would join the autobiographists—Benvenuto Cellini, Margot Asquith, Benjamin Franklin, et Al, as Ring Lardner would insist. Do you know Ring? He and I are going to have one of these amicable literary duels soon, like the famous *Isn't That Just Like a Man? Oh, Well, You Know How Women Are!* which Mrs. Rinehart and Irvin Cobb fought to a finish. But speaking of sport, I have discovered my grandest favourite sport, in spite of motoring, which is deep sea fishing, nothing less. Let me inform you that I landed a 9-pound dolphin which he is like fire-opals all over and will grace the wall of my dining-room no matter if all my friends suffer with him the rest of their lives. He was a male dol-

phin; get that! It makes a difference from the deep sea fishing sportsman's standpoint. And this place of mine at the end of South Broadway where I can roll cocoanuts the rest of my life if I want to is at, in or about Delray, Florida. D-e-l-r-a-y; you've spelled it."

"We're publishing your new book on how to get thin, *Tomorrow We Diet.*"

"Oh, yes. Well, I am several laps ahead of that. Now, I am going up to my home in Madison, Connecticut, to work. Later, I'll maybe drive out to Yellowstone Park or some place. Well, I might stay here at the Brevoort for a month; run down to Philadelphia, maybe. Did you know I once wrote a book for children that has sold 500,000 copies? And, besides a young son whom I am capable of entertaining if you'll let him tell you, I have a few ideas. . . ."

Hold on! This isn't so easy as it looked.

Probably Nina Wilcox Putnam is inimitable. This one and that may steal Ring W. Lardner's stuff, but there is a sort of Yale lock effect about the slang (American slanguage) in such books as *West Broadway* which is not picked so easily. As for the new Nina Wilcox Putnam novel, *Laughter Limited*—if you don't believe what we say about N.W.P. inimitableness just open that book and see for yourself. The story of a movie actress? Yes, and considerable more. Just as *West Broadway* was a great deal more than an amusing story, being actually the best hunch

extant on transcontinental motoring, outside of the automobile blue books, which are not nearly such good reading.

And then there's *Tomorrow We Diet*, in which Nina Wilcox Putnam tells how she reduced fifty pounds in seven months without exercising anything but her intelligence. But if you want to know about Nina Wilcox Putnam, read her story in her own words that appeared in the American Magazine for May, 1922. Here is a bit of it:

"Believe you me, considering the fact that they are mostly men, which it would hardly be right to hold that up against them, Editors in my experience has been an unusually fine race, and it is my contracts with them has made me what I am today, I'm sure I'm satisfied. And when a fellow or sister writer commences hollering about how Editors in America don't know anything about what is style or English, well anyways not enough to publish it when they see it, why all I can say is that I could show them living proof to the contrary, only modesty and good manners forbids me pointing, even at myself. I am also sure that the checks these hollerers have received from said Editors is more apt to read the Editor regrets than pay to the order of, if you get what I mean.

"Well, I have had it pretty soft, I will admit, because all the work I done to get where I am, is never over eight hours a day penal servitude, locked up in my study and fighting against only such minor odds and intrusions as please may I

have a dollar and a quarter for the laundry, or now dear you have been writing long enough, I have brought you a nice cup of tea, just when I am going strong on a important third chapter. But my work is of course not really work since it is done in the home, as my relations often remind me. At least they did until I got George, that's my pres. husband, and he never lets me be interrupted unless he wants to interrupt me himself for a clean collar or something.

"Also besides working these short hours, four of which is generally what us authors calls straight creative work, I have it soft in another way. I got a pretty good market for my stuff and always had, and this of course has got me so's I can draw checks as neat and quick as anybody in the family and they love to see me do it.

"All kidding to one side it is the straight dope when I say that from being merely the daughter of honest and only moderately poor parents I have now a house of my own, the very one in our town which I most admired as a child; and the quit-claim deed come out of my own easy money. I also got a car or two—and a few pieces of the sort of second-hand stuff which successful people generally commence cluttering up their house with as a sign of outward and visible success. I mean the junk one moves in when one moves the golden oak out. . . .

"I never commenced going over really big until it was up to me to make good every time I deliv-

ered, and this was not until my husband died and left me with a small son, which I may say in passing, that I consider he is the best thing I have ever published. Well, there I was, a widow with a child, and no visible means of support except when I looked into the mirror. Of course, before then I had been earning good money, but only when I wanted something, or felt like it. Now I had to want to feel like it three hundred and sixty-five days a year.

"I'll tell the world it was some jolt."

ii

Perfect Behaviour is the calmly confident title of the new book by Donald Ogden Stewart—a work which will rejoice the readers of *A Parody Outline of History*. Behaviour is the great obstacle to happiness. One may overcome all the ordinary complexes. One may kill his cousins and get his nephews and nieces deported, and refuse to perform Honest Work—yet remain a hopeless slave to the *Book of Etiquette*. In a Pullman car, with a ticket for the lower berth, he will take the seat facing backward, only to tremble and blush with shame on learning his social error. Who has not suffered the mortification of picking up the fork that was on the floor and then finding out afterward that it was the function of the waiter to pick up the fork? What is a girl to do if, escorted home at night from the dance, she

finds the hour is rather late and yet her folks are still up? Whether she should invite the young man in or ask him to call again, she is sure to do the wrong thing. Then there are those wedding days, the proudest and happiest of a girl's life, when she slips her hand into the arm of the wrong man or otherwise gives herself away before she is given away. Tragedy lurks in such trifles. Don Stewart, who has suffered countless mortifications and heartbreaks from just such little things as these, determined that something shall be done to spare others his own unfortunate experiences.

Perfect Behaviour is the result of his brave determination. It is a book that will be constantly in demand until society is abolished. Then, too, there is that new behaviouristic psychology. You have not heard of that? I can only assure you that Mr. Stewart's great work is founded upon all the most recent principles of behaviouristic psychology. Noted scientists will undoubtedly endorse it. You will endorse it yourself, and you will be able to cash in on it.

Stewart wrote *A Parody Outline of History* for The Bookman. When the idea was broached, John Farrar, editor of The Bookman, was about the only person who saw the possibilities. Response to the *Parody Outline of History* was immediate, spontaneous and unanimous. When the chapters appeared as a book, this magnificent take-off of contemporary American writers as well as of H. G. Wells leaped at once into the place of a

best seller. It remains one. The thing that it accomplished is not likely to be well done again for years.

iii

Neither Here Nor There is the title of a new book by Oliver Herford, author of *This Giddy Globe.*

I do not know which is funnier, Herford or his books. Among the unforgotten occasions was one when he was in the Doran office talking about a forthcoming book and nibbling on animal crackers. Suddenly he stopped nibbling and exclaimed with a gasp of dismay:

"Good heavens! I've been eating the illustrations for my book."

iv

Timothy Tubby's Journal is, of course, the diary of the famous British novelist with notes by Theresa Tubby, his wife. Tubby, on his visit to this side, was remarkably observant. He says:

"How weary we were after a few hours of being interviewed and photographed! This deep appreciation on the part of the American people was touching, but exhausting. Yet my publishers telephoned me every two or three hours, to say that editions of my latest novel were flying through multitudinous presses; that I must bear up under the strain and give the public what it

demands; namely, the glimpse of me and of my aristocratic wife. This, it seems, is what sells a book in America. The public must see an author in order to believe that he can write.

"When my distinguished forebear Charles Dickens [1] arrived in the town of Boston, he found his room flooded with offers of a pew at Sunday morning church. This fashion in America has apparently passed, though I was taken on sight-seeing expeditions to various cathedrals whose architecture seemed to me to be execrable (largely European copies—nothing natively American). It was never suggested that I attend divine service. On the contrary, I had countless invitations to be present at what is known as a 'cocktail chase.' My New York literary admirers seemed tumbling over one another to offer me keys to their cellars and to invite me to take part in one of those strange functions. It is their love of danger, rather than any particular passion for liquor, that has, I believe, given birth to these elaborate fêtes.

"A cocktail chase takes place shortly before dinner. It may lead you into any one of a number of places, even as far as the outlying districts of the Bronx. If you own a motor, you may use that; if not, a taxi will do. Usually a large number of motors are employed. Add to this pursuing motorcycle policemen, and the sight is most im-

[1] The relationship was on my husband's father's side. The Turbots were never so closely connected with the bourgeoisie.

pressive. The police are for protection against crime waves, not for the arrest of the cocktail chasers. A revenue agent performs this function, when it becomes necessary.

"The number of our invitations was so large that it was hard to pick and choose. Naturally, we did not care to risk attendance at any function which might injure our reputation. Usually my wife has an almost psychic sense of such matters; but the Social Register was of no assistance in this case.[1] Before several hours had passed, however, we decided to hire a social secretary. I phoned my publisher for a recommendation. 'Dear Tubby,' he said, 'what you need is a publicity agent, not a social secretary. I'll send you the best New York can offer immediately. It was careless of me not to think of it before. You seemed to have a genius for that sort of thing yourself.'

"The publicity agent is difficult to explain. He is somehow connected with an American game which originated in the great northwest, and which is called log-rolling. He stands between you and the public which is clamouring for a glimpse of you. The difference between a social secretary and a publicity agent seems to be that the former merely answers invitations, while the latter makes sure that you are invited. He writes

[1] We, of course, had entrée to all the best Fifth Avenue homes, but since we have now become literary folk, we chose to remain so. We therefore avoided the better classes.

your speeches for you, sometimes even goes so far as to write your novels, and, in a strange place, will impersonate you at all public functions unless your wife objects.[1]

"Mr. Vernay arrived, fortunately, in time to sort our invitations. 'First,' he said, 'just you and Terry' (he was one of those brusque new world types and Theresa rather enjoyed his familiarity—'so refreshing,' I remember she said) 'sit right down and I'll tell you all about literature in this here New York.' "

. . . I have always been meaning to read Tubby's novels—so like those of Archibald Marshall and Anthony Trollope, I understand—but have never got around to it. Now I feel I simply must.

V

Such an expert judge as Franklin P. Adams has considered that the ablest living parodist in verse is J. C. Squire. Certainly his *Collected Parodies* is a masterly performance quite fit to go on the shelf with Max Beerbohm's *A Christmas Garland*. In *Collected Parodies* will be found all those verses which, published earlier in magazines and in one or two books, have delighted the readers of Punch and other magazines—"Imaginary Speeches," "Steps to Parnassus," "Tricks of the

[1] Indeed Mr. Vernay was a most accomplished gentleman, and I never objected to him. I only remarked once that I was glad Timothy was not so attractive to the ladies as Mr. Vernay. This, I did not consider an objection.

Trade," "Repertory Drama, How They Do It and How They Would Have Done It," "Imaginary Reviews and Speeches" and "The Aspirant's Manual."

The great source book of fun in rhyme, however, is and will for a long time remain Carolyn Wells's *The Book of Humorous Verse.* This has not an equal in existence, so far as I know, except *The Home Book of Verse.* Here in nearly 900 pages are specimens of light verse from Chaucer to Chesterton. Modern writers, such as Bert Leston Taylor and Don Marquis, share the pages with Robert Herrick and William Cowper, Charles Lamb and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Verses whimsical, satiric, narrative, punning—there is no conceivable variety overlooked by Miss Wells in what was so evidently a labour of love as well as of the most careful industry, an industry directed by an exceptional taste.

P. G. Wodehouse used to write lyrics for musical plays in England, interpolating one or two in existing successes. Then he came to America and began writing lyrics, interpolating them in musical comedies over here. Then he began interpolating extremely funny short stories in the American magazines and he has now succeeded in interpolating into modern fiction some of the funniest novels of the last few years. This bit from his latest, *Three Men and a Maid*, is typical:

"Mrs. Hignett was never a very patient woman.

" 'Let us take all your negative qualities for

granted,' she said curtly. 'I have no doubt that there are many things which you do not do. Let us confine ourselves to issues of definite importance. What is it, if you have no objection to concentrating your attention on that for a moment, that you wish to see me about?'

" 'This marriage.'

" 'What marriage?'

" 'Your son's marriage.'

" 'My son is not married.'

" 'No, but he's going to be. At eleven o'clock this morning at the Little Church Around the Corner!'

"Mrs. Hignett stared.

" 'Are you mad?'

" 'Well, I'm not any too well pleased, I'm bound to say,' admitted Mr. Mortimer. 'You see, darn it all, I'm in love with the girl myself!'

" 'Who is this girl?'

" 'Have been for years. I'm one of those silent, patient fellows who hang around and look a lot, but never tell their love. . . .'

" 'Who is this girl who has entrapped my son?'

" 'I've always been one of those men who . . .'

" 'Mr. Mortimer! With your permission we will take your positive qualities for granted. In fact, we will not discuss you at all. . . . What is her name?'

" 'Bennett.'

" 'Bennett? Wilhelmina Bennett? The daugh-

ter of Mr. Rufus Bennett? The red-haired girl I met at lunch one day at your father's house?'

" 'That's it. You're a great guesser. I think you ought to stop the thing.'

" 'I intend to.'

" 'Fine!'

" 'The marriage would be unsuitable in every way. Miss Bennett and my son do not vibrate on the same plane.'

" 'That's right. I've noticed it myself.'

" 'Their auras are not the same colour.'

" 'If I thought that once,' said Bream Mortimer, 'I've thought it a hundred times. I wish I had a dollar for every time I thought it. Not the same colour! That's the whole thing in a nutshell.' "

Mr. Wodehouse is described by a friend as "now a somewhat fluid inhabitant of England, running over here spasmodically. Last summer he bought a race-horse. It is the beginning of the end!"

Chapter VII

THE VITALITY OF MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

i

THE total result . . . after twelve years is that I have learned to sit down at my desk and begin work simultaneously," wrote Mrs. Rinehart in 1917. "One thing died, however, in those years of readjustment and struggle. That was my belief in what is called 'inspiration.' I think I had it now and then in those days, moments when I felt things I had hardly words for, a breath of something much bigger than I was, a little lift in the veil.

"It does not come any more.

"Other things bothered me in those first early days. I seemed to have so many things to write about and writing was so difficult. Ideas came, but no words to clothe them. Now, when writing is easy, when the technique of my work bothers me no more than the pen I write with, I have less to say.

"I have words, but fewer ideas to clothe in them. And, coming more and more often is the

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feeling that, before I have commenced to do my real work, I am written out; that I have for years wasted my substance in riotous writing and that now, when my chance is here, when I have lived and adventured, when, if ever, I am to record honestly my little page of these great times in which I live, now I shall fail."

These surprising words appeared in an article in the American Magazine for 1917. Not many months later *The Amazing Interlude* was published and, quoting Mrs. Rinehart soon afterward, I said: "If her readers shared this feeling they must have murmured to themselves as they turned the absorbing pages of *The Amazing Interlude:* 'How absurd!' It is doubtful if they recalled the spoken misgiving at all."

Few novels of recent years have had so captivating a quality as had this war story. But I wish to emphasise again what I felt and tried to express at that time—the sense of Mrs. Rinehart's vitality as a writer of fiction. In what seem to me to be her best books there is a freshness of feeling I find astonishing. I felt it in *K;* I found it in *The Amazing Interlude;* and I find it in her new novel just published, *The Breaking Point.*

The Breaking Point is the story of a man's past and his inability to escape from it. If that were all, it might be a very commonplace subject indeed. It is not all, nor half.

Dr. Richard Livingstone, just past thirty, is supposedly the nephew of Dr. David Livingstone,

with whom he lives and whose practice he shares in the town of Haverly; but at the very outset of the novel, we have the fact that—according to a casual visitor in Haverly—Dr. Livingstone's dead brother had no son; was unmarried, anyway. And then it transpires that, whatever may have been the past, Dr. Livingstone has walled it off from the younger man's consciousness. The elder man has built up a powerful secondary personality—secondary in the point of time only, for Richard Livingstone is no longer aware of any other personality, nor scarcely of any former existence. He does, indeed, have fugitive moments in which he recalls with a painful and unsatisfactory vagueness some manner of life that he once had a part in. But in his young manhood, in the pleasant village where there is none who isn't his friend, deeply centred in his work, stayed by the affection of Dr. Livingstone, these whispers of the past are infrequent and untroubling.

The casual visitor's surprise and the undercurrent of talk which she starts is the beginning of a rapid series of incidents which force the problem of the past up to the threshold of Richard Livingstone's consciousness. There would then be two ways of facing his difficulties, and he takes the braver. Confronted with an increasingly difficult situation, a situation sharpened by his love for Elizabeth Wheeler, and her love for him, young Dr. Dick plays the man.

The title of Mrs. Rinehart's story comes from the psychological (and physical) fact that there is in every man and woman a point at which Nature steps in and says:

"See here, you can't stand this! You've got to forget it."

This is the breaking point, the moment when amnesia intervenes. But later there may come a time when the erected wall safeguarding the secondary personality gives way. The first, submerged or walled-off personality may step across the levelled barrier. That extraordinarily dramatic moment does come in the new novel and is handled by Mrs. Rinehart with triumphant skill.

It will be seen that this new novel bears some resemblances to *K*, by many of her readers considered Mrs. Rinehart's most satisfactory story. If I may venture a personal opinion, *The Breaking Point* is a much stronger novel than *K*. To me it seems to combine the excellence of character delineation noticeable in *K* with the dramatic thrill and plot effectiveness which made *The Amazing Interlude* so irresistible as you read it.

ii

To say so much is to bear the strongest testimony to that superb vitality, which, characteristic of Mrs. Rinehart as a person, is yet more charac-

teristic of her fiction. There is, I suppose, this additional interest in regard to *The Breaking Point*, that Mrs. Rinehart is the wife of a physician and was herself, before her marriage, a trained nurse. The facts of her life are interesting, though not nearly so interesting as the way in which she tells them.

She was the daughter of Thomas Beveridge Roberts and Cornelia (Gilleland) Roberts of Pittsburgh. From the city's public and high schools she went into a training school for nurses, acquiring that familiarity with hospital scenes which served her so well when she came to write *The Amazing Adventures of Letitia Carberry*, the stories collected under the title of *Tish* and the novel *K*. She became, at nineteen, the wife of Stanley Marshall Rinehart, a Pittsburgh physician.

"Life was very good to me at the beginning," said Mrs. Rinehart in the *American Magazine* article I have referred to. "It gave me a strong body and it gave me my sons before it gave me my work. I do not know what would have happened had the work come first, but I should have had the children. I know that. I had always wanted them. Even my hospital experience, which rent the veil of life for me, and showed it often terrible, could not change that fundamental thing we call the maternal instinct. . . . I would forfeit every part of success that has come to me rather than lose any part, even the smallest, of

my family life. It is on the foundation of my home that I have builded.

"Yet, for a time, it seemed that my sons were to be all I was to have out of life. From twenty to thirty I was an invalid. . . . This last summer (1917), after forty days in the saddle through unknown mountains in Montana and Washington, I was as unwearied as they were. But I paid ten years for them."

Mrs. Rinehart had always wanted to write. She began in 1905—she was twenty-nine that year—and worked at a tiny mahogany desk or upon a card table "so low and so movable. It can sit by the fire or in a sunny window." She "learned to use a typewriter with my two forefingers with a baby on my knee!" She wrote when the children were out for a walk, asleep, playing. "It was frightfully hard. . . . I found that when I wanted to write I could not and then, when leisure came and I went to my desk, I had nothing to say."

I quote from a chapter on Mrs. Rinehart in my book *The Women Who Make Our Novels:*

"Her first work was mainly short stories and poems. Her very first work was verse for children. Her first check was for $25, the reward of a short article telling how she had systematised the work of a household with two maids and a negro 'buttons.' She sold one or two of the poems for children and with a sense of guilt at the desertion of her family made a trip to New York.

She made the weary rounds in one day, 'a heart-breaking day, going from publisher to publisher.' In two places she saw responsible persons and everywhere her verses were turned down. 'But one man was very kind to me, and to that publishing house I later sent *The Circular Staircase*, my first novel. They published it and some eight other books of mine.'

"In her first year of sustained effort at writing, Mrs. Rinehart made about $1,200. She was surrounded by 'sane people who cried me down,' but who were merry without being contemptuous. Her husband has been her everlasting help. He 'has stood squarely behind me, always. His belief in me, his steadiness and his sanity and his humour have kept me going, when, as has happened now and then, my little world of letters has shaken under my feet.' To the three boys their mother's work has been a matter of course ever since they can remember. 'I did not burst on them gloriously. I am glad to say that they think I am a much better mother than I am a writer, and that the family attitude in general has been attentive but not supine. They regard it exactly as a banker's family regards his bank.' "

Most of the work of the twelve years from 1905 to 1917 was done in Mrs. Rinehart's home. But when she had a long piece of work to do she often felt "the necessity of getting away from everything for a little while." So, beginning about 1915, she rented a room in an office build-

ing in Pittsburgh once each year while she was writing a novel. It was sparsely furnished and, significantly, it contained no telephone. In 1917 she became a commuter from her home in Sewickley, a Pittsburgh suburb. Her earnings had risen to $50,000 a year and more.

"My business with its various ramifications had been growing; an enormous correspondence, involving business details, foreign rights, copyrights, moving picture rights, translation rights, second serial rights, and dramatisations, had made from the small beginning of that book of poems a large and complicated business.

"I had added political and editorial writing to my other work, and also records of travel. I was quite likely to begin the day with an article opposing capital punishment, spend the noon hours in the Rocky Mountains, and finish off with a love story!

"I developed the mental agility of a mountain goat! Filing cases entered into my life, card index systems. To glance into my study after working hours was dismaying."

More recently, Mrs. Rinehart has become a resident of Washington, D. C. Her husband is engaged in the Government health service and the family lives in the Wardman Park Hotel, having taken the apartment of the late Senator Boies Penrose of Pennsylvania.

iii

"Yet, if I were to begin again, I would go through it all, the rejections at the beginning, the hard work, the envious and malicious hands reached up to pull down anyone who has risen ever so little above his fellows. Not for the money reward, although that has been large, not for the publicity, although I am frank enough to say I would probably miss being pointed out in a crowd! But because of two things: the friends I have made all over the world, and the increased outlook and a certain breadth of perception and knowledge that must come as the result of years of such labour. I am not so intolerant as in those early days. I love my kind better. I find the world good, to work and to play in.

"I sometimes think, if I were advising a young woman as to a career, that I should say: 'First, pick your husband.'

"It is impossible to try to tell how I have attempted to reconcile my private life with my public work without mentioning my husband. Because, after all, it requires two people, a man and a woman, to organise a home, and those two people must be in accord. It has been a sort of family creed of ours that we do things together. We have tried, because of the varied outside interests that pull hard, to keep the family life even more intact than the average. Differing widely as they do, my husband's profession and my ca-

reer, we have been compelled to work apart. But we have relaxed, rested and played, together.

"And this rule holds good for the family. Generally speaking, we have been a sort of closed corporation, a board of five, with each one given a vote and the right to cast it. Holidays and home matters, and picnics and dogs, and everything that is of common interest all come up for a discussion in which the best opinion wins. The small boy had a voice as well as the biggest boy. And it worked well.

"It is not because we happened to like the same things. People do not happen to like the same things. It is because we tried to, and it is because we have really all grown up together.

"Thus in the summer we would spend weeks in the saddle in the mountains of the Far West, or fishing in Canada. But let me be entirely frank here. These outdoor summers were planned at first because there were four men and one woman in our party. Now, however, I love the open as the men do."

iv

"Writing is a clean profession. The writer gets out of it exactly what he puts in, no more and no less. It is one-man work. No one can help. The writer works alone, solitary and unaided. And, contrary to the general opinion, what the writer has done in the past does not help him in the

future. He must continue to make good, day after day.

"More than that he must manufacture a new article every day, and every working hour of his day. He cannot repeat himself. Can you imagine a manufacturer turning out something different all the time? And his income stopping if he has a sick headache, or goes to a funeral?"

V

Next to the vitality, the variety of Mrs. Rinehart's work is most noticeable. Her first novel, *The Circular Staircase*, was a mystery tale, and so was her second, *The Man in Lower Ten*. She has, from time to time, continued to write excellent mystery stories. *The Breaking Point* is, from one standpoint, a first class mystery story; and then there is that enormously successful mystery play, written by Mrs. Rinehart in conjunction with Avery Hopwood, *The Bat*. Nor was this her first success as a playwright for she collaborated with Mr. Hopwood in writing the farce *Seven Days*. Shall I add that Mrs. Rinehart has lived part of her life in haunted houses? I am under the impression that more than one of her residences has been found to be suitably or unsuitably haunted. There was that house at Bellport on Long Island —but I really don't know the story. I do know that the family's experience has been such as to provide material for one or more very good mys-

tery novels. My own theory is that Mrs. Rinehart's indubitable gift for the creation of mystery yarns has been responsible for the facts. I imagine that the haunting of the houses has been a projection into some physical plane of her busy subconsciousness. I mean, simply, that instead of materialising as a story, her preoccupation induced a set of actual and surprising circumstances. Why couldn't it? Let Sir Oliver Lodge or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the Society for Psychical Research, anybody who knows about that sort of thing, explain!

Consider the stories about Letitia Carberry. Tish is without a literary parallel. Well-to-do, excitement loving, with a passion for guiding the lives of two other elderly maidens like herself; with a nephew who throws up hopeless hands before her unpredictable performances, Tish is funny beyond all description.

Just as diverting, in a quite different way, is Bab, the sub-deb and forerunner of the present-day flapper.

Something like a historical romance is *Long Live the King!*—a story of a small boy, Crown Prince of a Graustark kingdom, whose scrapes and friendships and admiration of Abraham Lincoln are strikingly contrasted with court intrigues and uncovered treason.

The Amazing Interlude is the story of Sara Lee Kennedy, who went from a Pennsylvania city to the Belgian front to make soup for the soldiers

and to fall in love with Henri. . . . But one could go on with other samples of Mrs. Rinehart's abundant variety. I think, however, that the vitality of her work, and not the variety nor the success in variety, is our point. That vitality has its roots in a sympathetic feeling and a sanative humour not exceeded in the equipment of any popular novelist writing in America today.

Books

by Mary Roberts Rinehart

THE CIRCULAR STAIRCASE
THE MAN IN LOWER TEN
WHEN A MAN MARRIES
THE WINDOW AT THE WHITE CAT
THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF LETITIA CARBERRY
WHERE THERE'S A WILL
THE CASE OF JENNY BRICE
THE AFTER HOUSE
THE STREET OF SEVEN STARS
K
THROUGH GLACIER PARK
TISH
THE ALTAR OF FREEDOM
LONG LIVE THE KING
TENTING TO-NIGHT
BAB, A SUB-DEB
KINGS, QUEENS AND PAWNS
THE AMAZING INTERLUDE
TWENTY-THREE AND A HALF HOURS' LEAVE

VITALITY OF MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

DANGEROUS DAYS
MORE TISH
LOVE STORIES
AFFINITIES AND OTHER STORIES
"ISN'T THAT JUST LIKE A MAN?"
THE TRUCE OF GOD
A POOR WISE MAN
SIGHT UNSEEN AND THE CONFESSION
THE BREAKING POINT

Sources
on Mary Roberts Rinehart

"*My Creed: The Way to Happiness—As I Found It*," by Mary Roberts Rinehart. AMERICAN MAGAZINE, October, 1917.
"*Mary Roberts Rinehart as She Appears*," by Robert H. Davis, AMERICAN MAGAZINE, October, 1917.
"*My Public*," by Mary Roberts Rinehart, THE BOOKMAN, December, 1920.
The Women Who Make Our Novels, by Grant Overton, MOFFAT, YARD & COMPANY.
Who's Who in America.

Chapter VIII

THEY HAVE ONLY THEMSELVES TO BLAME

i

IF people will write memoirs, they must expect to suffer. They have only themselves to blame if life becomes almost intolerable from the waves of praise and censure. I am going to speak of some books of memoirs and biography—highly personal and decidedly unusual books, in the main by persons who are personages.

The Life of Sir William Vernon Harcourt concerns Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, who was born in 1827 and died in 1904. He was an English statesman, grandson of Edward Vernon Harcourt, Archbishop of York. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was called to the bar in 1854. He entered Parliament (for Oxford) in 1868, sat for Derby 1880-95, and for West Monmouthshire, 1895-1904. He was Solicitor-general 1873-74, Home Secretary 1880-85 and Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1886, 1892-94 and 1894-95. From March, 1894, to December, 1898, he was leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons.

He wrote in the London Times under the signature of "Historicus" a series of letters on International Law, which were republished in 1863. His biography, which begins before Victoria ascended the throne and closes after her death, is the work of A. G. Gardiner.

Memoirs of the Memorable is by Sir James Denham, the poet-author of "Wake Up, England!" and deals with most of the prominent social names of the end of the last and commencement of this century, including Mr. Gladstone, Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Byron, Robert Browning, the Bishop of London, Cardinal Howard, Lord Dunedin, Lewis Carroll, Lord Marcus Beresford and the late Bishop of Manchester. The book also deals with club life and the leading sportsmen.

The Pomp of Power is by an author who very wisely remains anonymous, like the author of *The Mirrors of Downing Street.* I shall not run the risks of perjury by asserting or denying that the author of *The Mirrors of Downing Street* has written *The Pomp of Power.* As to the probability perhaps readers of *The Pomp of Power* had better judge. It is an extremely frank book and its subjects include the leading personalities of Great Britain to-day and, indeed, all the world. Lloyd George, Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, Lord Haig, Marshal Joffre, Lord Beaverbrook, Millerand, Loucheur, Painleve, Cambon, Lord Northcliffe, Colonel Repington and Krassin of

Soviet Russia are the persons principally portrayed. The book throws a searchlight upon the military and diplomatic relations of Britain and France before and during the war, and also deals with the present international situation. It may fairly be called sensational.

Especially interesting is the anonymous author's revelation of the rôle played in the war by Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, so lately assassinated in London. The author was evidently an intimate of Sir Henry and, just as evidently, he is intimately acquainted with Lloyd George, apparently having worked with or under the Prime Minister. He is neither Lloyd George's friend nor enemy and his portrait of the Prime Minister is the most competent I can recall. Can he be Philip Kerr, Lloyd George's adviser?

I praise, in this slightly superlative fashion, the picture of the British Prime Minister by the author of *The Pomp of Power* . . . and I pick up another book and discover it to be E. T. Raymond's *Mr. Lloyd George: A Biographical and Critical Sketch.* The author of *Uncensored Celebrities* is far too modest when he calls his new work a "sketch." It is a genuine biography with that special accent due to the biographer's personality and his power of what I may call penetrative synthesis. By that I mean the insight into character which coördinates and builds—the sort of biography that makes a legend about a man.

Mr. Raymond does not begin with the "little Welshman" but with a Roman Emperor, Diocletian, our first well-studied exemplar of the "coalition mind." These are the words with which, after a brilliant survey of the Prime Minister's career, the author closes:

"If, however, we withhold judgment on every point where a difference of opinion is possible, if we abandon to destructive criticism every act of administrative vigour which is claimed by his admirers as a triumph, if we accept the least charitable view of his faults and failures, there still remains more than enough with which to defy what Lord Rosebery once called 'the body-snatchers of history, who dig up dead reputations for malignant dissection.' If only that he imparted, in a black time, when it appeared but too likely that the Alliance might falter and succumb from mere sick-headache, his own defying, ardent, and invincible spirit to a tired, puzzled, distracted and distrustful nation; if only that he dispelled the vapours, inspired a new hope and resolution, brought the British people to that temper which makes small men great, assured our Allies that their cause was in the fullest sense our own, and finally achieved the great moral victory implied in 'unity of command'—if these things be alone considered, he will be judged to have earned for his portrait the right to a dignified place in the gallery of history; and some future generation will probably recall with aston-

ishment that it was considered unfit to adorn the dining-room of a London club."

And here are two new books by Margot Asquith! One is *My Impressions of America*, the other continues *The Autobiography of Margot Asquith*. Of the first of these books there is to say that it represents Mrs. Asquith's matured impressions and will have a value that could not possibly attach to interviews or statements she gave on this side. It also gives, for the first time, her frank and direct analyses of the personalities of the distinguished people whom she met in America. The continuation of her *Autobiography* is a different matter. Those who have read *The Autobiography of Margot Asquith* will be prepared for the new book. At least, I hope they will be prepared and yet I question whether they will. There is, after all, only one person for Mrs. Asquith to surpass, and that is herself; and I think she has done it. This new book will add Volumes III. and IV. to *The Autobiography of Margot Asquith*.

In *The Memoirs of Djemal Pasha: Turkey 1913-21* will be found the recollections of a man who was successively Military Governor of Constantinople, Minister of Public Works and Naval Minister and who, with Enver Bey and Talaat Bey, formed the triumvirate which dictated Turkish policy and guided Turkey's fate after the coup d'état of 1913. I believe these memoirs are of extraordinary interest and the greatest impor-

tance. They give the first and only account from the Turkish side of events in Turkey since 1913. The development of relations with Germany, France and England immediately before the war is clearly traced, and a graphic account is given of the first two months of the war, the escape of the Goeben and the attempts made to keep Turkey neutral. When these failed, Djemal Pasha was sent to govern Syria and to command the Fourth Army, which was to conquer Egypt. The attack on the Suez Canal is described, and then the series of operations which culminated in the British reverses in the two battles of Gaza. Further important sections are devoted to the revolt of the Arabs and the question of responsibility for the Armenian massacres.

The value of *Miscellanies—Literary and Historical*, by Lord Rosebery, consists not so much in his recollections of people as in the delight of reading good prose. Lord Rosebery has a natural dignity and a charm of lucid phrasing that adapts itself admirably to the essay form he has chosen. The subjects he takes up are beloved figures of the past. Robert Burns, as Lord Rosebery talks of him, walks about in Dumfries and holds spellbound by sheer personal charm the guests of the tavern. There are papers on Burke, on Dr. Johnson, on Robert Louis Stevenson, and others as great. One group deals with Scottish History and one with the service of the state. The last is a study of the *genius loci* of such places of mellow

associations as Eton and the Turf. The sort of book one returns to!

ii

I was going to say something about Andrew C. P. Haggard's book, *Madame de Staël: Her Trials and Triumphs*. But so profoundly convinced am I of the book's fascination that I shall reprint the first chapter. If this is not worthy of Lytton Strachey, I am no judge:

"In the year 1751 a young fellow, only fourteen years of age, went to Magdalen College at Oxford, and in the same year displayed his budding talent by writing *The Age of Sesostris, Conqueror of Asia*, which work he burnt in later years.

"The boy was Edward Gibbon, who, after becoming a Roman Catholic at the age of sixteen, was sent by his father to Switzerland, to continue his education in the house of a Calvinist minister named M. Pavilliard, under the influence of which gentleman he became a Protestant again at Lausanne eighteen months later.

"The young fellow, while leading the life of gaiety natural to his age in company with a friend named Deyverdun, became an apt student of the classics and was soon a proficient in French, in which tongue he wrote before long as fluently as in English. With young Deyverdun he worked, and in his company Edward Gibbon also played. After visiting frequently at the house of the cele-

brated Voltaire at Monrepos, and after being present when the distinguished French philosopher played in his own comedies and sentimental pieces, the young fellow's thoughts soon turned to the theme which was the continual subject of conversation of the ladies and gentlemen who were Voltaire's guests and formed the company of amateurs with whom the great dramatic writer was in the habit of rehearsing his plays. This was, as might have been suspected in such a society, the theme of love.

"As it happened, there was in the habit of visiting Lausanne a young lady who was a perfect paragon. Her name was Suzanne Curchod, and she was half Swiss and half French, her father being a Swiss pastor and her mother a Frenchwoman.

"Very handsome and sprightly in appearance, the fair Suzanne was well instructed in sciences and languages. Her wit, beauty and erudition made her a prodigy and an object of universal admiration upon the occasion of her visits to her relations in Lausanne. Soon an intimate connection existed between Edward Gibbon and herself; he frequently accompanied her to stay at her mountain home at Crassy, while at Lausanne also they indulged in their dream of felicity. Edward loved the brilliant Suzanne with a union of desire, friendship, and tenderness, and was in later years proud of the fact that he was once capable of feeling such an exalted sentiment.

There is no doubt that, had he been able to consult his own inclinations alone, Gibbon would have married Mademoiselle Curchod, but, the time coming when he was forced to return to his home in England his father declared that he would not hear of 'such a strange alliance.'

" 'Thereupon,' says Gibbon in his autobiography, 'I yielded to my fate—sighed as a lover, obeyed as a son, and my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence and new habits of life.'

"These habits of life included four or five years' service in the Hampshire Militia, in which corps Suzanne's lover became a captain, the regiment being embodied during the period of the Seven Years' War.

"Upon returning to Lausanne, at the age of twenty-six, in 1763, Edward Gibbon was warmly received by his old love, but he heard that she had been flirting with others, and notably with his friend M. Deyverdun. He himself, while now mixing with an agreeable society of twenty unmarried young ladies who, without any chaperons, mingled with a crowd of young men of all nations, also 'lost many hours in dissipation.'

"He was not long in showing Suzanne that he no longer found her indispensable to his happiness, with the result that she assailed him, although in vain, with angry reproaches. Notwithstanding that she begged Gibbon to be her friend if no longer her lover, while vowing herself to be confiding and tender, he acted hard-heartedly and

declined to return to his old allegiance, coldly replying: 'I feel the dangers that continued correspondence may have for both of us.'

"It is impossible to feel otherwise than sorry for the brilliant Suzanne at this period, as although from her subsequent manœuvres it became evident that her principal object in life was to obtain a rich husband, from the manner in which she humiliated herself to him it is evident that she was passionately in love with the author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

"Eventually the neglected damsel gave up the siege of an unwilling lover, while assuring her formerly devoted Edward that the day would come 'when he would regret the irreparable loss of the too frank and tender heart of Suzanne Curchod.'

"Had the pair been united, one wonders what would have been the characteristics of the offspring of an English literary man like Gibbon, who became perhaps the world's greatest historian, and a beautiful woman of mixed nationality, whose subsequent career, although gilded with riches and adorned with a position of power, displays nothing above the mediocre and commonplace.

"Edward Gibbon's fame, which was not long in coming, was his own, and will remain for so long as a love of history and literature exists in the world, whereas that of Suzanne Curchod rests upon two circumstances—the first that she was

once the sweetheart of Gibbon, the second that she was the mother of a Madame de Staël.

"When finally cast off by the Englishman, the Swiss Pastor's daughter remembered that, if pretty, she was poor, and had her way to make in the world. She commenced to play fast and loose with a M. Correvon, a rich lawyer, whom she said she would marry 'if she had only to live with him for four months in each year.'

"The next lover was a pastor, who was as mercenary as herself, for he threw her over for a lady with a large fortune. After this failure to establish herself, Suzanne became tired of seeking a husband in Switzerland and went to Paris as the companion of the rich and handsome Madame Vermoneux, the supposed mistress of Jacques Necker, the rich Swiss banker, who was established in the French capital. Once in Paris, it was not long before by her seductions Suzanne succeeded in supplanting Madame Vermoneux in the still young banker's affections, with the result that she married him in 1764.

"Gibbon, whom she had last seen in 1763, returned to the side of his former love when she was at length safely married to another man. We find him writing in 1765, to his friend Lord Sheffield, formerly Mr. Holroyd, that he had spent ten delicious days in Paris about the end of June. 'She was very fond of me, and the husband was particularly civil.' He continues confidentially: 'Could they insult me more cruelly? Ask me

every evening to supper, go to bed and leave me alone with his wife—what an impertinent security!'

"It was in the month of April in the following year, 1766, that was born Madame Necker's only child, Anne Louise Germaine, who was destined to become one of the most remarkable women of modern times. From the great literary talent displayed by this wonderfully precocious child from girlhood, it is difficult not to imagine but that in some, if merely spiritual, way the genius of her mother's old lover had descended through that mother's brain as a mantle upon herself. That she learnt to look upon Gibbon with admiration at an early age is sure. Michelet informs us that owing to the praises showered upon the historian by M. Necker, Germaine was anxious, as her mother had been before her, to become Gibbon's wife. She was, however, destined to have another husband—or rather we should say two other husbands."

iii

Recollections and Reflections by a Woman of No Importance has added greatly to the number of this author's readers, gained in the first instance by her *Memories Discreet and Indiscreet*, which was followed by *More Indiscretions*.

Recollections and Reflections consists of random memories of lords and ladies, sportsmen,

Kings, Queens, cooks, chauffeurs and Empresses, related with a great deal of philosophy and insight and no little wit.

There are stories of Gladstone's love-making, of Empress Eugenie and the diamond the soldier swallowed, of Balfour's hats, Henry Irving's swelled head and the cosmetics of Disraeli. There are stories of etiquette at a hair-dressers' ball side by side with comments on Kitchener's waltzing.

Lady Angela Forbes was the daughter of the fourth Earl of Rosslyn and the youngest child of one of the largest and most prominent families in England. Kitchener, Lord Roberts, Disraeli, the Kaiser, Prince Edward—she has dined or sailed or hunted with them all on the most informal terms. She tells, with engaging frankness, in *Memories and Base Details*, of the gaieties, the mistakes and tragedies of herself and her friends.

It was Baron von Margutti who informed the Emperor Francis Joseph in 1914 that Serbia had rejected his ultimatum. The character of the Emperor is a moot question. *The Emperor Francis Joseph and His Times*, reminiscences by Baron von Margutti, is by a man who knew the Emperor intimately and who knew the men and women who surrounded him daily. Baron von Margutti met all the distinguished European figures, such as Edward VII, Emperor Wilhelm, Czar Nicholas and the Empress Eugenie who came to Austria to visit. He watched from a par-

ticularly favourable vantage point the deft moves of secret diplomacy which interlaced the various governments.

Lord Frederic Hamilton, born in 1856, the fourth son of the first Duke of Abercorn, was educated at Harrow, was formerly in the British Diplomatic Service and served successively as Secretary of the British Embassies in Berlin and Petrograd and the Legations at Lisbon and Buenos Aires. He has travelled much and, besides being in Parliament, was editor of the Pall Mall Magazine till 1900. The popularity of his books of reminiscences is explained by the fascinating way in which he tells a story or illuminates a character. Other books of memoirs have been more widely celebrated but I know of none which has made friends who were more enthusiastic. *The Vanished Pomps of Yesterday*, *Days Before Yesterday* and *Here, There and Everywhere* are constantly in demand.

But, all along, a surprise has been in store and the time is now here to disclose it! The talent for this delightful species of memoirising runs through the family; and Sir Frederic Hamilton's brother, Lord Ernest Hamilton, proves it. Lord Ernest is the author of *Forty Years On*, a new book quite as engaging as *Here, There and Everywhere*, and the rest of Sir Frederic's. Word from London is that Sir Frederic will have no new book this year; he steps aside with a gallant bow for Lord Ernest. I have been turning pages

in *Forty Years On* and reading about such matters as the Copley curse, school life at Harrow where Shifner and others bowed the knee to Baal, bull fights in Peru and adventures in the Klondike. Personally the most amusing moments of the book I find to be those in which Lord Ernest describes his experiments in speaking ancient Greek in modern Greece. But this is perhaps because I, too, have tried to speak syllables of Xenophon while being rapidly driven (in a barouche) about Patras—with the same lamentable results. It is enough to unhinge the reason, the pronunciation of modern Greek, I mean. But maybe your hobby is bathing? Lord Ernest has a word in praise of Port Antonio, Jamaica, as a bathing ground.

What he says about hummingbirds—but I mustn't! *Forty Years On* is a mine of interest and each reader ought to be pretty well left to work it for himself.

Chapter IX

AUDACIOUS MR. BENNETT

i

MR. BENNETT'S audacity has always been evident. One might say that he began by daring to tell the truth about an author, continued by daring to tell the truth about the Five Towns, and has now reached the incredible stage where he dares to tell the truth about marriage. This is affronting Fate indeed. It was all very well for Arnold Bennett to write a play called *Cupid and Commonsense*. Perhaps, in view of the fact that it is one of the great novels of the twentieth century, it was all right for him to create *The Old Wives' Tale;* but it cannot be all right for him to compose such novels as *Mr. Prohack* and his still newer story, *Lilian*.

Think of the writers who have stumbled and fallen over the theme of marriage. There is W. L. George . . . but I cannot bring myself to name other names and discuss their tragic fates. There are those who have sought to make the picture of marriage a picture of horror; but that was because they did not dare to tell the

truth. That marriage is all, no one but Mr. Bennett seems to realise. No one but Mr. Bennett seems to realise that, as between husband and wife, there are no such things as moral standards, there can be no such thing as an ethical code, there can be no interposition of lofty abstractions which Men call principles and appeal to as they would appeal to a just God, Himself. No one but Mr. Bennett seems to realise that the relation between a man and his wife necessarily transcends every abstraction, brushes aside every ideal of "right" and "wrong." Mr. Bennett, in the course of the amazing discoveries of an amazing lifetime, has made the greatest discovery possible to mortals of this planet. He has discovered that marriage occurs when a man and a woman take the law into their own hands, and not only the human law, but the divine.

It would be impossible for the hero of a Bennett novel of recent years to be a character like Mark Sabre in *If Winter Comes.* Arnold Bennett's married hero would realise that the health, comfort, wishes, doubts, dissimulations; the jealousies, the happiness or the fancied happiness, and the exterior appearances of the woman who was his wife abolish, for practical purposes, everything else. It is due to Mr. Bennett more than to anyone else that we now understand that while "husband" may be a correct legal designation, "lover" is the only possible æsthetic appellation of the man who is married. If he is not a lover

ARNOLD BENNETT

he is not a husband except for statutory purposes —that is all.

ii

It is hard to describe *Lilian*. I will let you taste it:

"Lilian, in dark blue office frock with an embroidered red line round the neck and detachable black wristlets that preserved the ends of the sleeves from dust and friction, sat idle at her flat desk in what was called 'the small room' at Felix Grig's establishment in Clifford Street, off Bond Street. There were three desks, three typewriting machines and three green-shaded lamps. Only Lilian's lamp was lighted, and she sat alone, with darkness above her chestnut hair and about her, and a circle of radiance below. She was twenty-three. Through the drawn blind of the window could just be discerned the backs of the letters of words painted on the glass: 'Felix Grig. Typewriting Office. Open day and night.' Seen from the street the legend stood out black and clear against the faintly glowing blind. It was eleven p.m.

"That a beautiful girl, created for pleasure and affection and expensive flattery, should be sitting by herself at eleven p.m., in a gloomy office in Clifford Street, in the centre of the luxurious, pleasure-mad, love-mad West End of London seemed shocking and contrary to nature, and

Lilian certainly so regarded it. She pictured the shut shops, and shops and yet again shops, filled with elegance and costliness—robes, hats, stockings, shoes, gloves, incredibly fine lingerie, furs, jewels, perfumes—designed and confected for the setting-off of just such young attractiveness as hers. She pictured herself rifling those deserted and silent shops by some magic means and emerging safe, undetected, in batiste so rare that her skin blushed through it, in a frock that was priceless and yet nothing at all, and in warm marvellous sables that no blast of wind or misfortune could ever penetrate—and diamonds in her hair. She pictured thousands of smart women, with imperious command over rich, attendant males, who at that very moment were moving quickly in automobiles from theatres towards the dancing-clubs that clustered round Felix Grig's typewriting office. At that very moment she herself ought to have been dancing. Not in a smart club; no! Only in the basement of a house where an acquaintance of hers lodged; and only with clerks and things like that; and only a gramophone. But still a dance, a respite from the immense ennui and solitude called existence!"

After Lilian's mother died she had been "Papa's cherished darling. Then Mr. Share caught pneumonia, through devotion to duty and died in a few days; and at last Lilian felt on her lovely cheek the winds of the world; at last she was free. Of high paternal finance she had never

in her life heard one word. In the week following the funeral she learnt that she would be mistress of the furniture and a little over one hundred pounds net. Mr. Share had illustrated the ancient maxim that it is easier to make money than to keep it. He had held shipping shares too long and had sold a fully-paid endowment insurance policy in the vain endeavour to replace by adventurous investment that which the sea had swallowed up. And Lilian was helpless. She could do absolutely nothing that was worth money. She could not begin to earn a livelihood. As for relatives, there was only her father's brother, a Board School teacher with a large vulgar family and an income far too small to permit of generosities. Lilian was first incredulous, then horror-struck.

"Leaving the youth of the world to pick up art as best it could without him, and fleeing to join his wife in paradise, the loving, adoring father had in effect abandoned a beautiful idolised daughter to the alternatives of starvation or prostitution. He had shackled her wrists behind her back and hobbled her feet and bequeathed her to wolves. That was what he had done, and what many and many such fathers had done, and still do, to their idolised daughters.

"Herein was the root of Lilian's awful burning resentment against the whole world, and of a fierce and terrible determination by fair means or foul to make the world pay. Her soul was a

horrid furnace, and if by chance Lionel Share leaned out from the gold bar of heaven and noticed it, the sight must have turned his thoughts towards hell for a pleasant change. She was saved from disaster, from martyrdom, from ignominy, from the unnameable, by the merest fluke. The nurse who tended Lionel Share's last hours was named Grig. This nurse had cousins in the typewriting business. She had also a kind heart, a practical mind, and a persuasive manner with cousins."

Lilian in the office late at night has been engaged in conversation by her employer, Mr. Grig, and Mr. Grig has finally come to the point.

" 'You know you've no business in a place like this, a girl like you. You're much too highly strung for one thing. You aren't like Miss Jackson, for instance. You're simply wasting yourself here. Of course you're terribly independent, but you do try to please. I don't mean try to please merely in your work. You try to *please*. It's an instinct with you. Now in typing you'd never beat Miss Jackson. Miss Jackson's only alive, really, when she's typing. She types with her whole soul. You type well—I hear—but that's only because you're clever all round. You'd do anything well. You'd milk cows just as well as you'd type. But your business is marriage, and a good marriage! You're beautiful, and, as I say, you have an instinct to please. That's the important thing. You'd make a success of marriage

because of that and because you're adaptable and quick at picking up. Most women when they're married forget that their job is to adapt themselves and to please. That's their job. They expect to be kowtowed to and spoilt and humoured and to be free to spend money without having to earn it, and to do nothing in return except just exist—and perhaps manage a household, pretty badly. They seem to forget that there are two sides to a bargain. It's dashed hard work, pleasing is, sometimes. I know that. But it isn't so hard as earning money, believe me! Now you wouldn't be like the majority of women. You'd keep your share of the bargain, and handsomely. If you don't marry, and marry fifty miles above you, you'll be very silly. For you to stop here is an outrage against commonsense. It's merely monstrous. If I wasn't an old man I wouldn't tell you this, naturally. Now you needn't blush. I expect I'm not far off thirty years older than you —and you're young enough to be wise in time.' "

iii

It will be seen that *Lilian* has all the philosophy and humour which make *Mr. Prohack* a joy forever, and in addition the new novel has the strong interest we feel in a young, beautiful, attractive, helpless girl, who has her way to make in the world. And yet, I love *Mr. Prohack*. I

think I have by heart some of the wisdom he utters; for instance—

On women: "Even the finest and most agreeable women, such as those with whom I have been careful to surround myself in my domestic existence, are monsters of cruelty."

On women's clubs: "You scarcely ever speak to a soul in your club. The food's bad in your club. They drink liqueurs before dinner at your club. I've seen 'em. Your club's full every night of the most formidable spinsters each eating at a table alone. Give up your club by all means. Set fire to it and burn it down. But don't count the act as a renunciation. You hate your club."

On his wife: "You may annoy me. You may exasperate me. You are frequently unspeakable. But you have never made me unhappy. And why? Because I am one of the few exponents of romantic passion left in this city. My passion for you transcends my reason. I am a fool, but I am a magnificent fool. And the greatest miracle of modern times is that after twenty-four years of marriage you should be able to give me pleasure by perching your stout body on the arm of my chair as you are doing."

On his daughter: "In 1917 I saw that girl in dirty overalls driving a thundering great van down Whitehall. Yesterday I met her in her foolish high heels and her shocking openwork stockings and her negligible dress and her exposed throat and her fur stole, and she was so

delicious and so absurd and so futile and so sure of her power that—that—well . . . that chit has the right to ruin me—not because of anything she's done, but because she is."

On kissing: "That fellow has kissed my daughter and he has kissed her for the first time. It is monstrous that any girl, and especially my daughter, should be kissed for the first time. . . . It amounts to an outrage."

On parenthood: "To become a parent is to accept terrible risks. I'm Charlie's father. What then? . . . He owes nothing whatever to me or to you. If we were starving and he had plenty, he would probably consider it his duty to look after us; but that's the limit of what he owes us. Whereas nothing can put an end to our responsibility towards him. . . . We thought it would be nice to have children and so Charlie arrived. He didn't choose his time and he didn't choose his character, nor his education, nor his chance. If he had his choice you may depend he'd have chosen differently. Do you want me, on the top of all that, to tell him that he must obediently accept something else from us—our code of conduct? It would be mere cheek, and with all my shortcomings I'm incapable of impudence, especially to the young."

On ownership: "Have you ever stood outside a money-changer's and looked at the fine collection of genuine banknotes in the window? Supposing I told you that you could look at them, and enjoy

the sight of them, and nobody could do more? No, my boy, to enjoy a thing properly you've got to own it. And anybody who says the contrary is probably a member of the League of all the Arts."

On economics: "That's where the honest poor have the advantage of us. . . . We're the dishonest poor. . . . We're one vast pretence. . . . A pretence resembles a bladder. It may burst. We probably shall burst. Still, we have one great advantage over the honest poor, who sometimes have no income at all; and also over the rich, who never can tell how big their incomes are going to be. We know exactly where we are. We know to the nearest sixpence."

On history: "Never yet when empire, any empire, has been weighed in the balance against a young and attractive woman has the young woman failed to win! This is a dreadful fact, but men are thus constituted."

On bolshevism: "Abandon the word 'bolshevik.' It's a very overworked word and wants a long repose."

iv

The best brief sketch of Arnold Bennett's life that I know of is given in the chapter on Arnold Bennett in John W. Cunliffe's *English Literature During the Last Half Century*. Professor Cunliffe, with the aid, of course, of Bennett's own story, *The Truth About an Author*, writes as follows:

"He was born near Hanley, the 'Hanbridge' of the Five Towns which his novels were to launch into literary fame, and received a somewhat limited education at the neighbouring 'Middle School' of Newcastle, his highest scholastic achievement being the passing of the London University Matriculation Examination. Some youthful adventures in journalism were perhaps significant of latent power and literary inclination, but a small provincial newspaper offers no great encouragement to youthful ambition, and Enoch Arnold Bennett (as he was then called) made his way at 21 as a solicitor's clerk to London, where he was soon earning a modest livelihood by 'a natural gift for the preparation of bills for taxation.' He had never 'wanted to write' (except for money) and had read almost nothing of Scott, Jane Austen, Dickens, Thackeray, the Brontës, and George Eliot, though he had devoured Ouida, boys' books and serials. His first real interest in a book was 'not as an instrument for obtaining information or emotion, but as a book, printed at such a place in such a year by so-and-so, bound by so-and-so, and carrying colophons, registers, water-marks, and *fautes d'impression*.' It was when he showed a rare copy of *Manon Lescaut* to an artist and the latter remarked that it was one of the ugliest books he had ever seen, that Bennett, now in his early twenties, first became aware of the appreciation of beauty. He won twenty guineas in a competition, con-

ducted by a popular weekly, for a humorous condensation of a sensational serial, being assured that this was 'art,' and the same paper paid him a few shillings for a short article on 'How a bill of costs is drawn up.' Meanwhile he was 'gorging' on English and French literature, his chief idols being the brothers de Goncourt, de Maupassant, and Turgenev, and he got a story into the Yellow Book. He saw that he could write, and he determined to adopt the vocation of letters. After a humiliating period of free lancing in Fleet Street, he became assistant editor and later editor of Woman. When he was 31, his first novel, *A Man From the North*, was published, both in England and America, and with the excess of the profits over the cost of typewriting he bought a new hat. At the end of the following year he wrote in his diary:

" 'This year I have written 335,340 words, grand total: 224 articles and stories, and four instalments of a serial called *The Gates of Wrath* have actually been published, and also my book of plays, *Polite Farces*. My work included six or eight short stories not yet published, also the greater part of a 55,000 word serial *Love and Life* for Tillotsons, and the whole draft, 80,000 words of my Staffordshire novel *Anna Tellwright*.'

"This last was not published in book form till 1902 under the title of *Anna of the Five Towns;* but in the ten years that had elapsed since he came

to London, Bennett had risen from a clerk at six dollars a week to be a successful 'editor, novelist, dramatist, critic, connoisseur of all arts' with a comfortable suburban residence. Still he was not satisfied; he was weary of journalism and the tyranny of his Board of Directors. He threw up his editorial post, with its certain income, and retired first to the country and then to a cottage at Fontainebleau to devote himself to literature.

"In the autumn of 1903, when Bennett used to dine frequently in a Paris restaurant, it happened that a fat old woman came in who aroused almost universal merriment by her eccentric behaviour. The novelist reflected: 'This woman was once young, slim, perhaps beautiful; certainly free from these ridiculous mannerisms. Very probably she is unconscious of her singularities. Her case is a tragedy. One ought to be able to make a heart-rending novel out of a woman such as she.' The idea then occurred to him of writing the book which afterwards became *The Old Wives' Tale*, and in order to go one better than Guy de Maupassant's 'Une Vie' he determined to make it the life-history of two women instead of one. Constance, the more ordinary sister, was the original heroine; Sophia, the more independent and attractive one, was created 'out of bravado.' The project occupied Bennett's mind for some years, during which he produced five or six novels of smaller scope, but in the autumn of 1907 he began to write *The Old Wives' Tale* and finished it in

July, 1908. It was published the same autumn, and though its immediate reception was not encouraging, before the winter was over it was recognised both in England and America as a work of genius. The novelist's reputation was upheld, if not increased, by the publication of *Clayhanger* in 1910, and in June, 1911, the most conservative of American critical authorities, the New York Evening Post, could pronounce judgment in these terms:

" 'Mr. Bennett's Bursley is not merely one single stupid English provincial town. His Baineses and Clayhangers are not simply average middle class provincials foredoomed to humdrum and the drab shadows of experience. His Bursley is every provincial town, his Baineses are all townspeople whatsoever under the sun. He professes nothing of the kind; but with quiet smiling patience, with a multitude of impalpable touches, clothes his scene and its humble figures in an atmosphere of pity and understanding. These little people, he seems to say, are as important to themselves as you are to yourself, or as I am to myself. Their strength and weakness are ours; their lives, like ours, are rounded with a sleep. And because they stand in their fashion for all human character and experience, there is even a sort of beauty in them if you will but look for it.' "

Books
by Arnold Bennett

Novels:

A MAN FROM THE NORTH
THE GRAND BABYLON HOTEL
THE GATES OF WRATH
ANNA OF THE FIVE TOWNS
LEONORA
HUGO
A GREAT MAN
THE BOOK OF CARLOTTA
WHOM GOD HATH JOINED
THE OLD ADAM
BURIED ALIVE
THE OLD WIVES' TALE
CLAYHANGER
DENRY THE AUDACIOUS [In England, THE CARD]
HILDA LESSWAYS
THE MATADOR OF THE FIVE TOWNS
HELEN WITH THE HIGH HAND
THE GLIMPSE
THE CITY OF PLEASURE
THESE TWAIN
THE LION'S SHARE
THE PRETTY LADY
THE ROLL CALL
MR. PROHACK
LILIAN

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

Plays:

CUPID AND COMMONSENSE
WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS
THE HONEYMOON
MILESTONES [With Edward Knoblauch]
THE GREAT ADVENTURE
THE TITLE
JUDITH
SACRED AND PROFANE LOVE
THE LOVE MATCH

Sources
on Arnold Bennett

Who's Who [In England].

English Literature During the Last Half Century, by John W. Cunliffe. THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

Arnold Bennett. A booklet published by GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY, 1911. (Out of print.)

The Truth About an Author, by Arnold Bennett. GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY.

The Author's Craft, by Arnold Bennett. GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY.

Some Modern Novelists, by Helen Thomas Follett and Wilson Follett. HENRY HOLT & COMPANY.

Arnold Bennett, by J. F. Harvey Darton, in the WRITERS OF THE DAY series.

The critical articles on Mr. Bennett and his individual books are too numerous to mention. The reader is referred to the New York Public Library or the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., and to the Annual Index of Periodical Publications for the last twenty years.

Chapter X

A CHAPTER FOR CHILDREN

i

I KNOW of only one book which really aids parents and others who have to oversee children's reading. That is Annie Carroll Moore's invaluable *Roads to Childhood*. The author, as supervisor of work with children in the New York Public Library, has had possibly a completer opportunity to understand what children like to read and why they like it than any other woman. What is more, she has the gift of writing readably about both children and books, and an unusual faculty for reconciling those somewhat opposite poles—things children like to read and the things it is well for them to read.

Miss Moore says that the important thing is a discovery of personality in children and a respect for their natural inclinations in reading—an early and live appreciation of literature and good drawings is best imparted by exposure rather than by insistence upon a too rigid selection. "What I like about these papers," said one young mother,

"is that they are good talk. You can pick the book up and open it anywhere without following a course of reading or instruction to understand it. There is full recognition of the fact that children are different and react differently to the same books at different periods of their development."

Maude Radford Warren's *Tales Told by the Gander* is one of those books for children that adults find interesting, too; and there is a new series of children's books by May Byron, concerning which I must say a few words. The series is called "Old Friends in New Frocks" and here are a few of the titles:

Billy Butt's Adventure: The Tale of the Wolf and the Goat.

Little Jumping Joan: The Tale of the Ants and the Grasshopper.

Jack-a-Dandy: The Tale of the Vain Jackdaw.

These books are noteworthy for their beautiful illustrations. Each volume has an inspired and fanciful frontispiece in colours by E. J. Detmold and line illustrations by Day Hodgetts. Moreover, there are end papers and the binding has a picture in colour that begins on the back and extends all the way around in front. Naturally they are for very young children—shall we say up to seven years old?

ii

On April 29, 1922, the Philadelphia Public Ledger printed a letter from twelve-year-old Marion Kummer, as follows:

"Dear Mr. Editor: My father asked me to write you a story about him and they say at school that I am good at stories, so I thought I would. I think he thinks I can write and become a great writer like him some day, but I would rather be a great actress like Leonora Ulrick. I saw her in a play where she went to sleep and they stuck pins in her but could not wake her up, which part I should not like. But at that I would rather be an actress because acting is pleasanter and more exciting and you do not have to write on the typewriter all day and get a pain in your back. Daddy says he would rather shovel coal but he does not, but snow sometimes, which has been very plentiful about here this winter, also sledding.

"When he is not working, he goes for a walk with the dogs, or tells us most any question we should ask almost like an encikelopedia. He is very good-natured and I love the things he writes, especially plays. Daddy has just finished a children's book called *The Earth's Story* about how it began millions of years ago when there was a great many fossils, so nice for children. Also about stone axes. My brother Fred made one but when he was showing us how it worked the head came off and hit me on the foot and I

kicked him. So stone axes were one of the man's first weapons. Daddy read us each chapter when it was done and we helped him except baby brother who wrote with red crayon all over one chapter when no one was there, and he should not have been in Daddy's office anyway. Daddy has to draw horses and engines for him all the time. He gets tired of it but what can he do?"

Now this is very pleasant, for here on the table is the first volume of *The Earth's Story—The First Days of Man* by Frederic Arnold Kummer; and this book for children has a preface for parents in it. In that preface Mr. Kummer says:

"In this process of storing away in his brain the accumulated knowledge of the ages the child's mind passes, with inconceivable rapidity, along the same route that the composite minds of his ancestors travelled, during their centuries of development. The impulse that causes him to want to hunt, to fish, to build brush huts, to camp out in the woods, to use his hands as well as his brain, is an inheritance from the past, when his primitive ancestors did these things. He should be helped to trace the route they followed with intelligence and understanding, he should be encouraged to know the woods, and all the great world of out-of-doors, to make and use the primitive weapons, utensils, toys, his ancestors made and used, to come into closer contact with the fundamental laws of nature, and thus to lay a groundwork for wholesome and practical thinking

which cannot be gained in the classroom or the city streets.

"As has been said, the writer has tested the methods outlined above. The chapters in *The First Days of Man* are merely the things he has told his own children. It is of interest to note that one of these, a boy of seven, on first going to school, easily outstripped in a single month a dozen or more children who had been at school almost a year, and was able to enter a grade a full year ahead of them. The child in question is not in the least precocious, but having understood the knowledge he has gained, he is able to make use of it, he has a definite mental perspective, a sure grasp on things, which makes study of any kind easy for him, and progression correspondingly rapid."

To say that *Jungle Tales, Adventures in India*, by Howard Anderson Musser is a series of missionary tales of adventure in India, is to give no idea of the thrills within its covers. There are fights with tigers, bears and bandits, and there is one long fight against ignorance and disease, superstition and merciless greed. And the fighter? He was an American athlete, who had won honour on the track and football field. Great for boys!

iii

The English *Who's Who* says:

"Colonel Stevenson Lyle Cummins"—then follows a string of degrees—"David Davies Pro-

fessor of Tuberculosis, University College, South Wales, Monmouthshire, and Principal Medical Officer to the King Edward VII. Welsh National Memorial Association since 1921. . . . Entered Army 1897; Captain, 1900; Major, 1909; Lieutenant-Colonel, 1915; Colonel, 1918; served Nile Expedition, 1898 (medal with clasp, despatches); Sudan 1900, 1902; Sudan, 1904 (Clasp); Osmanieh 4th class, 1907; European War, 1914-18 (C.B., C.M.G., despatches six times, Brevetted Colonel); Legion of Honour (Officer), Couronne de Belgique (Officer); Col. 1918; Croix de Guerre (Belgian), 1918, retired from Army, 1921."

But I don't suppose that it was as a consequence of anything in that honourable record that Colonel Cummins wrote *Plays for Children*, in three volumes. I suppose it was in consequence of another fact which the English *Who's Who* mentions (very briefly and abbreviatedly) as "four *c*."

The possession of four children is a natural explanation of three volumes of juvenile plays.

But wait a moment! Did Colonel Cummins write them wholly for his youngsters? As I read these little plays, it seems to me that there is frequently an undercurrent of philosophy, truth, satire—what you will—which, unappreciated by the youngsters themselves, will make these household dramas ingratiating to their parents. At any rate, this is exceptional work; you may be sure it is, for publishers are not in the habit of bringing out an author's three volumes of children's plays

all at one stroke, and that is what is happening with Colonel Cummins's little dramas.

What is there to say in advance about *The Fairy Flute*, by Rose Fyleman? No one of the increasing number who have read her utterly charming book of poems for children, *Fairies and Chimneys*, will need more than the breath that this book is coming. I shall give myself (and I think everyone who reads this) the pleasure of quoting a poem from *Fairies and Chimneys*. This will show those who do not know the work of Rose Fyleman what to expect:

PEACOCKS

Peacocks sweep the fairies' rooms;
They use their folded tails for brooms;
But fairy dust is brighter far
Than any mortal colours are;
And all about their tails it clings
In strange designs of rounds and rings;
And that is why they strut about
And proudly spread their feathers out.

iv

Francis Rolt-Wheeler has spent years at sea, travelled a great deal in the West Indies, and South America, trapped at Hudson Bay, punched cattle in the far West, lived in mining camps, traversed the greater part of the American continent on horseback, lived with the Indians of the plains and lived with the Indians of the Pueblos,

was a journalist for several years, has been in nearly every country of the world, and when last heard from (May, 1922) was meandering through Spain on his way to Morocco intending to take journeys on mule-back among the wild tribes of the Riff. He is studying Arabic and Mohammedan customs to prepare himself for this latest adventure. He writes boys' books.

Can he write boys' books? If a man of his experience cannot write boys' books, then boys' books are hopeless.

Plotting in Pirate Seas, besides the thrill of the story relating Stuart Garfield's adventures in Haiti, contains glimpses of the whole pageant we call "the history of the Spanish Main." There is a chapter which gives an account of Teach and Blackbeard, the buccaneers. Other chapters offer natural history in connection with Stuart Garfield's hunt for his father. The boy gets an inside view of newspaper work and a clear idea of native life in Haiti and of conditions which brought about American intervention on the island.

Hunting Hidden Treasure in the Andes is, explicitly, the story of Julio and his guidance of two North American boys to the buried treasure of the Incas; but the book is much more than that. It gives, with accuracy and exceptional interest, a panorama of South American civilisation.

These are the first two volumes of the "Boy Journalist Series." Two other books, the first

two volumes in the series called "Romance-History of America," are:

In the Days Before Columbus, which deals with the North America that every youngster wants to know about—a continent flung up from the ocean's bed and sculptured by ice; a continent that was kept hidden for centuries from European knowledge by the silent sweep of ocean currents; a continent that developed civilisations comparable with the Phœnician and Egyptian; the continent of the Red Man. The book places what we customarily call "American History" in its proper perspective by hanging behind it the stupendous backdrop of creation and the prehistoric time.

The Quest of the Western World is not the usual story of Columbus, preceded by a few allusions to the adventurings of earlier navigators. Dr. Rolt-Wheeler has written a book which goes back to the days of Tyre and Sidon, which includes the core of the old Norse and Irish sagas, and which comes down to Columbus with all the rich tapestry of a daring past unrolled before the youthful reader. Nor does the author stand on the letter of his title; he tells the story of the Quest both backward and forward, tying up the past with the present and avoiding, with singular success, the fatal effect which makes a child feel: "All this was a long time ago; it hasn't anything to do with me or to-day."

And now two new Rolt-Wheeler books are ready! *Heroes of the Ruins*, the third volume of

the "Boy Journalist Series," tells of a fourteen-year-old who lived for four years of war in trenches and dugouts. Andre, the Mole, went from one company to another, dodged the authorities and successfully ran the risks of death, emerging at the end to take up the search for his scattered family, from whom he had been separated in the early days of the fighting.

The third volume in the "Romance-History of America" books is *The Coming of the Peoples*, which tells how the French, Spanish, English and Dutch settled early America.

v

Olive Roberts Barton is a sister of Mary Roberts Rinehart. When she taught school in Pittsburgh for several years before her marriage, she worked with children of all sizes and ages during part of that time and found small children were her specialty. She says:

"Working with them, and giving out constantly as one must with small children, was like casting bread upon waters. It came back to me, what I was giving them, not after many days but at once; their appreciation, their spontaneous sympathy, their love gave to me something I could get nowhere else, and it was enriching. I felt then, as I still feel, that children give us the best things the world has to offer, and my effort has been to make some return. Twice during the crises in my mar-

ried life I went back to the schoolroom for comfort. Once after the death of one of my own children, when I had no others left, and again when my husband went to the battle-fields of France.

"I have written with the same experience as I taught. My first successes were with adult fiction. I have had something like six hundred short stories published by syndicates, and magazine articles have appeared from time to time, but gradually I realised that I wanted children for my audience. Several years ago I published *Cloud Boat Stories*. Later *The Wonderful Land of Up*. A syndicate editor saw these books and asked me to start a children's department for the five hundred papers he served. That was the beginning of the 'Twins.' Nancy and Nick were born two years ago. They still visit their little friends every day in the columns of many newspapers. What a vast audience I have! A million children! No wonder one wishes to do his best.

"I have two children of my own. They are my critics. What they do not like, I do not write. We all love the out-of-doors and to us a bird or a little wild animal is a fairy."

But when I try to say something about the *Nancy and Nick* series I find it has all been said for me (and said so much better!) by that accomplished bookseller, Candace T. Stevenson:

"I have just finished all of the books by Olive Roberts Barton. They are truly spontaneous and

delightful. In fact, they have carried my small group of children listeners and myself along as breathlessly as if they were Alice in Wonderland or Davy and the Goblin. They are delightful nonsense with exactly the right degree of an undercurrent of ideas which they can make use of in their business of everyday living. Children love morals which are done as skilfully as the chapter on Examinations in Helter Skelter Land, and Sammy Jones, the Topsy Turvy Boy in Topsy Turvy Land, and I found my group not only seriously discussing them but putting them into practice. Speaking of putting things into practice, there is only one spot in all of the books which seemed to me as if it might get some children into trouble. The description of Waspy Weasel's trick on the schoolmaster in Helter Skelter Land where he squeezes bittersweet juice into the schoolmaster's milk and puts him to sleep, I think would lead any inquiring mind to try it.

"The whale who loved peppermints, Torty Turtle with his seagull's wings on, the adventures of the children when they help Mr. Tingaling collect the rents—this isn't the same old stuff of the endless 'bedtime' stories which are dealt out to us by the yard. These animals are real people with the tinge which takes real imagination to paint.

"At first I was disappointed in the pictures, but as I read on I came to like those also, and I found that they were wholly satisfactory to the children. The picture of the thousand legger with all his

shoes on is entrancing, and poor Mrs. Frog cutting out clothes because the dressmaker had made them for the children when they were still tadpoles. These books ought to come like an oasis in the desert to the poor-jaded-reading-aloud-parent."

vi

At Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania, in a small house built from her own plans and standing 2,000 feet above sea level, in a growing shade of trees, lives Marion Ames Taggart, author of the Jack-in-the-Box series—four children's books that renew their popularity every year. They are:

AT GREENACRES
THE QUEER LITTLE MAN
THE BOTTLE IMP
POPPY'S PLUCK

At Greenacres and *The Queer Little Man* are particularly good to read aloud to a group of children; they really are the mystery and detective story diluted for children.

Miss Taggart, an only child and extremely frail in childhood, had the good fortune as a consequence of ill-health to be educated entirely at home. As a result she had free access to really good books—for the home was in Haverhill, Mass. She began to carry out a cherished wish to write for young girls in 1901, when her first book (for girls of about sixteen) was published in St.

Nicholas. She has a habit of transplanting four-footed friends in her stories under their own names—as where, in the Jack-in-the-Box series, one finds Pincushion, Miss Taggart's own plump grey kitten.

What will the children say to *A Wonder Book*, by Nathaniel Hawthorne, with pictures in color by Arthur Rackham? I do not know why I ask this rhetorical question, which, like most questions of the sort, should be followed by exclamation points! There will be exclamations, at any rate, over this book, surely the most beautiful of the year, perhaps of several years. The quality of Arthur Rackham's work is well known, its artistic value is undisputedly of the very highest. And Hawthorne's text—the story of the Gorgon's head, the tale of Midas, Tanglewood, and the rest—is of the finest literary, poetic and imaginative worth.

Chapter XI

COBB'S FOURTH DIMENSION

i

AS a three-dimensional writer, Irvin S. Cobb has long been among the American literary heavy-weights. Now that he has acquired a fourth dimension, the time has come for a new measurement of his excellences as an author.

Among those excellences I know a man (responsible for the manufacture of Doran books) who holds that Cobb is the greatest living American author. The reason for this is severely logical, to wit: Irvin Cobb always sends in his copy in a perfect condition. His copy goes to the manufacturer of books with a correctly written title page, a correctly written copyright page, the exact wording of the dedication, an accurate table of contents, and so on, all the way through the manuscript. Moreover, when proofs are sent to Mr. Cobb, he makes very few changes. He reduces to a minimum the difficulties of a printer and his changes are always perceptibly changes for the better.

But I don't suppose that any of this would re-

IRVIN S. COBB

dound to Cobb's credit in the eyes of a literary critic.

And to return to the subject of the fourth dimension: My difficulty is to know in just what direction that fourth dimension lies. Is the fourth dimension of Cobb as a novelist or as an autobiographer? It puzzles me to tell inasmuch as I have before me the manuscripts of Mr. Cobb's first novel, *J. Poindexter, Colored*, and his very first autobiography, a volume called *Stickfuls*.

The title of *Stickfuls* will probably not be charged with meaning to people unfamiliar with newspaper work. Perhaps it is worth while to explain that in the old days, when type was set by hand, the printer had a little metal holder called a "stick." When he had set a dozen lines —more or less—he had a "stickful." Although very little type is now set by hand, the stick as a measure of space is still in good standing. The reporter presents himself at the city desk, tells what he has got, and is told by the city editor, "Write a stickful." Or, "Write two sticks." And so on.

Stickfuls is not so much the story of Cobb's life as the story of people he has met and places he has been, told in a series of extremely interesting chapters—told in a leisurely and delightful fashion of reminiscence by a natural association of one incident with another and one person with someone else. For example, Cobb as a newspaper man, covered a great many trials in court; and

one of the chapters of *Stickfuls* tells of famous trials he has attended.

ii

Now about this novel of Cobb's: Jeff Poindexter will be remembered by all the readers of Mr. Cobb's short stories as the negro body servant of old Judge Priest. In *J. Poindexter, Colored*, we have Jeff coming to New York. Of course, New York seen through the eyes of a genuine Southern darkey is a New York most of us have never seen. There's nothing like sampling, so I will let you begin the book:

"My name is J. Poindexter. But the full name is Jefferson Exodus Poindexter, Colored. But most always in general I has been known as Jeff for short. The Jefferson part is for a white family which my folks worked for them one time before I was born, and the Exodus is because my mammy craved I should be named after somebody out of the Bible. How I comes to write this is this way:

"It seems like my experiences here in New York is liable to be such that one of my white gentleman friends he says to me I should take pen in hand and write them out just the way they happen and at the time they is happening, or right soon afterwards, whilst the memory of them is clear in my brain; and then he's see if he can't get them printed somewheres, which on the top of the other things which I now is, will make me an author

with money coming in steady. He says to me he will fix up the spelling wherever needed and attend to the punctuating; but all the rest of it will be my own just like I puts it down. I reads and writes very well but someway I never learned to puncture. So the places where it is necessary to be punctual in order to make good sense and keep everything regulation and make the talk sound natural is his doings and also some of the spelling. But everything else is mine and I asks credit.

"My coming to New York, in the first place, is sort of a sudden thing which starts here about a month before the present time. I has been working for Judge Priest for going on sixteen years and is expecting to go on working for him as long as we can get along together all right, which it seems like from appearances that ought to be always. But after he gives up being circuit judge on account of him getting along so in age he gets sort of fretful by reasons of him not having much to do any more and most of his own friends having died off on him. When the State begins going Republican about once in so often, he says to me, kind of half joking, he's a great mind to pull up stakes and move off and go live somewheres else. But pretty soon after that the whole country goes dry and then he says to me there just naturally ain't no fitten place left for him to go without he leaves the United States."

It seems that Judge Priest finally succumbed to an invitation to visit Bermuda, a place where a

gentleman can still raise a thirst and satisfy it. Jeff could not stand the house without the Judge in it; and when an opportunity came to go to New York, Jeff went.

iii

The biographer of Cobb is Robert H. Davis, editor of Munsey's Magazine, whose authoritative account I take pleasure in reprinting here—the more so because it appeared some time ago in a booklet which is now out of print. Mr. Davis's article was first printed in The Sun, New York:

"Let me deal with this individual in a categorical way. Most biographers prefer to mutilate their canvas with a small daub which purports to be a sketch of the most significant event in the life of the accused. Around this it is their custom to paint smaller and less impressive scenes, blending the whole by placing it in a large gilded frame, which, for obvious reasons, costs more than the picture—and it is worth more. Pardon me, therefore, if I creep upon Mr. Cobb from the lower left-hand corner of the canvas and chase him across the open space as rapidly as possible. It is not for me to indicate when the big events in his life will occur or to lay the milestones of the route along which he will travel. I know only that they are in the future, and that, regardless of any of his achievements in the past, Irvin Cobb has not yet come into his own.

"The first glimpse I had of him was in a half-tone portrait in the New York Evening World five years ago. This picture hung pendant-like from a title which read 'Through Funny Glasses, by Irvin S. Cobb.' It was the face of a man scarred with uncertainty; an even money proposition that he had either just emerged from the Commune or was about to enter it. Grief was written on the brow; more than written, it was emblazoned. The eyes were heavy with inexpressible sadness. The corners of the mouth were drooped, heightening the whole effect of incomprehensible depression. Quickly I turned to the next page among the stock quotations, where I got my depression in a blanket form. The concentrated Cobb kind was too much for me.

"A few days later I came suddenly upon the face again. The very incongruity of its alliance with laughter overwhelmed me, and wonderingly I read what he had written, not once, but every day, always with the handicap of that half-tone. If Cobb were an older man, I would go on the witness stand and swear that the photograph was made when he was witnessing the Custer Massacre or the passing of Geronimo through the winter quarters of his enemies. Notwithstanding, he supplied my week's laughter.

"Digression this:

"After Bret Harte died, many stories were written by San Franciscans who knew him when he first put in an appearance on the Pacific Coast.

One contemporary described minutely how Bret would come silently up the stairs of the old Alta office, glide down the dingy hallway through the exchange room, and seat himself at the now historic desk. It took Bret fifteen minutes to sharpen a lead pencil, one hour for sober reflection, and three hours to write a one-stick paragraph, after which he would carefully tear it up, gaze out of the window down the Golden Gate, and go home.

"He repeated this formula the following day, and at the end of the week succeeded in turning out three or four sticks which he considered fit to print. In later years, after fame had sought him out and presented him with a fur-lined overcoat, which I am bound to say Bret knew how to wear, the files of the Alta were ransacked for the pearls he had dropped in his youth. A few gems were identified, a very few. Beside this entire printed collection the New England Primer would have looked like a set of encyclopedias. Bret worked slowly, methodically, brilliantly, and is an imperishable figure in American letters.

"Returning to Cobb: He has already written twenty times more than Bret Harte turned out during his entire career. He has made more people laugh and written better short stories. He has all of Harte's subtle and delicate feeling, and will, if he is spared, write better novels about the people of today than Bret Harte, with all his genius and imagination, wrote around the Pioneers. I know of no single instance where one

man has shown such fecundity and quality as Irvin Cobb has so far evinced, and it is my opinion that his complete works at fifty will contain more good humour, more good short stories, and at least one bigger novel than the works of any other single contemporaneous figure.

"He was born in Paducah, Kentucky, in June, '76. I have taken occasion to look into the matter and find that his existence was peculiarly varied. He belonged to one of those old Southern families —there being no new Southern families—and passed through the public schools sans incident. At the age of sixteen he went into the office of The Paducah Daily News as a reportorial cub.

"He was first drawn to daily journalism because he yearned to be an illustrator. Indeed, he went so far as to write local humorous stories, illustrating them himself. The pictures must have been pretty bad, although they served to keep people from saying that his literature was the worst thing in the paper.

"Resisting all efforts of the editor, the stockholders and the subscribers of The Paducah Daily News, he remained barricaded behind his desk until his nineteenth year, when he was crowned with a two-dollar raise and a secondary caption under his picture which read 'The Youngest Managing Editor of a Daily Paper in the United States.'

"If Cobb was consulted in the matter of this

review, he would like to have these preliminaries expunged from his biography. But the public is entitled to the details.

"It is also true that he stacked up more libel suits than a newspaper of limited capital with a staff of local attorneys could handle before he moved to Louisville, where, for three years, he was staff correspondent of The Evening Post. It was here that Cobb discovered how far a humorist could go without being invited to step out at 6 a.m. and rehearse 'The Rivals' with real horse-pistols.

"The first sobering episode in his life occurred when the Goebel murder echoed out of Louisville. He reported this historic assassination and covered the subsequent trials in the Georgetown court house. Doubtless the seeds of tragedy, which mark some of his present work, were sown here. Those who are familiar with his writings know that occasionally he sets his cap and bells aside and dips his pen into the very darkness of life. We find it particularly in three of his short stories entitled 'An Occurrence Up a Side Street,' 'The Belled Buzzard,' and 'Fishhead.' Nothing better can be found in Edgar Allan Poe's collected works. One is impressed not only with the beauty and simplicity of his prose, but with the tremendous power of his tragic conceptions and his art in dealing with terror. There appears to be no phase of human emotion beyond his pen. Without an effort he rises from the level of actualities

to the high plane of boundless imagination, invoking laughter or tears at will.

"After his Louisville experience Cobb married and returned to Paducah to be managing editor of The Democrat. Either Paducah or The Democrat got on his nerves and, after a comparison of the Paducah school of journalism with the metropolitan brand, he turned his face (see Evening World half-tone) in the direction of New York, buoyed up by the illusion that he was needed there along with other reforms.

"He arrived at the gates of Manhattan full of hope, and visited every newspaper office in New York without receiving encouragement to call again. Being resourceful he retired to his suite of hall bedrooms on 57th Street West and wrote a personal note to every city editor in New York, setting forth in each instance the magnificent intellectual proportions of the epistolographer. The next morning, by mail, Cobb had offers for a job from five of them. He selected The Evening Sun.

"At about that time the Portsmouth Peace Conference convened, and The Sun sent the Paducah party to help cover the proceedings. Upon arriving at Portsmouth, Cobb cast his experienced eye over the situation, discovered that the story was already well covered by a large coterie of competent, serious-minded young men, and went into action to write a few columns daily on subjects having no bearing whatsoever on the conference. These stories were written in the ebullition of

youth, inspired by the ecstasy which rises from the possession of a steady job; a perfect deluge from the well springs of spontaneity. There wasn't a single fact in the entire series, and yet The Sun syndicated these stories throughout the United States. All they possessed was I-N-D-I-V-I-D-U-A-L-I-T-Y.

"At the end of three weeks, Cobb returned to New York, to find that he could have a job on any newspaper in it. This brings him to The Evening World, the half-tone engraving, which was the first glimpse I had of him, and the dawn of his subsequent triumphs. For four years he supplied the evening edition and The Sunday World with a comic feature, to say nothing of a comic opera, written to order in five days. The absence of a guillotine in New York State accounts for his escape for this latter offence. Nevertheless, in all else his standard of excellence ascended. He reported the Thaw trial in long-hand, writing nearly 600,000 words of testimony and observation, establishing a new style for reporting trials, and gave further evidence of his power. That performance will stand out in the annals of American journalism as one of the really big reportorial achievements.

"At about this juncture in his career Cobb opened a door to the past, reached in and took out some of the recollections of his youth. These he converted into 'The Escape of Mr. Trimm,' his first short fiction story. It appeared in The

Saturday Evening Post. The court scene was so absolutely true to life, so minutely perfect in its atmosphere, that a Supreme Court judge signed an unsolicited and voluntary note for publication, in which he said that Mr. Cobb had reported with marvelous accuracy and fulness a murder trial at which His Honour had presided.

"Gelett Burgess, in a lecture at Columbia College, said that Cobb was one of the ten great American humourists. Cobb ought to demand a recount. There are not ten humourists in the world, although Cobb is one of them. The extraordinary thing about Cobb is that he can turn a burst of laughter into a funeral oration, a snicker into a shudder and a smile into a crime. He writes in octaves, striking instinctively all the chords of humour, tragedy, pathos and romance with either hand. Observe this man in his thirty-ninth year, possessing gifts the limitations of which even he himself has not yet recognised.

"In appraising a genius, we must consider the man's highest achievement, and in comparing him with others the verdict must be reached only upon consideration of his best work. For scintillant wit and unflagging good humour, read his essays on the Teeth, the Hair and the Stomach. If you desire a perfect blending of all that is essential to a short story, read 'The Escape of Mr. Trimm' or 'Words and Music.' If you are in search of pure, unadulterated, boundless terror, the gruesome quality, the blackness of despair and the fear

of death in the human conscience, 'Fishhead,' 'The Belled Buzzard' or 'An Occurrence Up a Side Street' will enthrall you.

"Thus in Irvin Cobb we find Mark Twain, Bret Harte and Edgar Allan Poe at their best. Reckon with these potentialities in the future. Speculate, if you will, upon the sort of a novel that is bound, some day, to come from his pen. There seem to be no pinnacles along the horizon of the literary future that are beyond him. If he uses his pen for an Alpine stock, the Matterhorn is his.

"There are critics and reviewers who do not entirely agree with me concerning Cobb. But they will.

"As I write these lines I recall a conversation I had with Irvin Cobb on the hurricane deck of a Fifth Avenue 'bus one bleak November afternoon, 1911. We had met at the funeral of Joseph Pulitzer, in whose employ we had served in the past.

"Cobb was in a reflective mood, chilled to the marrow, and not particularly communicative.

"At the junction of Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street we were held up by congested traffic. After a little manœuvring on the part of a mounted policeman, the Fifth Avenue tide flowed through and onward again.

" 'It reminds me of a river,' said Cobb, 'into which all humanity is drawn. Some of these people think because they are walking up-stream they are getting out of it. But they never escape. The current is at work on them. Some day they will

get tired and go down again, and finally pass out to sea. It is the same with real rivers. They do not flow up-hill.'

"He lapsed into silence.

" 'What's on your mind?' I inquired.

" 'Nothing in particular,' he said, scanning the banks of the great municipal stream, 'except that I intend to write a novel some day about a boy born at the headwaters. Gradually he floats down through the tributaries, across the valleys, swings into the main stream, and docks finally at one of the cities on its banks. This particular youth was a great success—in the beginning. Every door was open to him. He had position, brains, and popularity to boot. He married brilliantly. And then The Past, a trivial, unimportant Detail, lifted its head and barked at him. He was too sensitive to bark back. Thereupon it bit him and he collapsed.'

"Again Cobb ceased talking. For some reason —indefinable—I respected his silence. Two blocks further down he took up the thread of his story again:

" '—and one evening, just about sundown, a river hand, sitting on a stringpiece of a dock, saw a derby hat bobbing in the muddy Mississippi, floating unsteadily but surely into the Gulf of Mexico.'

"As is his habit, Cobb tugged at his lower lip.

" 'What are you going to call this novel?'

" 'I don't know. What do you think?'

" 'Why not "The River"?'

" 'Very well, I'll call it "The River." '

"He scrambled from his seat. 'I'm docking at Twenty-seventh Street. Good-bye. Keep your hat out of the water.'

"Laboriously he made his way down the winding staircase from the upper deck, dropped flat-footed on the asphalt pavement, turned his collar up, leaned into the gust of wind from the South, and swung into the cross-current of another stream.

"I doubt if he has any intention of calling his story 'The River.' But I am sure the last chapter will contain something about an unhappy wretch who wore a derby hat at the moment he walked hand in hand with his miserable Past into the Father of Waters.

"For those who wish to know something of his personal side, I can do no better than to record his remarks to a stranger, who, in my presence, asked Irvin Cobb, without knowing to whom he was speaking, what kind of a person Cobb was.

" 'Well, to be perfectly frank with you,' replied the Paducah prodigy, 'Cobb is related to my wife by marriage, and if you don't object to a brief sketch, with all the technicalities eliminated, I should say in appearance he is rather bulky, standing six feet high, not especially beautiful, a light roan in colour, with a black mane. His figure is undecided, but might be called bunchy in places. He belongs to several clubs, including

The Yonkers Pressing Club and The Park Hill Democratic Marching Club, and has always, like his father, who was a Confederate soldier, voted the Democratic ticket. He has had one wife and one child and still has them. In religion he is an Innocent Bystander.'

"Could anything be fuller than this?"

iv

It was Mr. Davis, also, who in the New York Herald of April 23, 1922, made public the evidence for the following box score:

	1st	2nd
Best Writer of Humour.....	Cobb	.....
Best All-Round Reporter....	Cobb	.....
Best Local Colourist.....	Cobb	.....
Best in Tales of Horror.....	Cobb	.....
Best Writer of Negro Stories.	.....	Cobb
Best Writer of Light Humorous Fiction	Tarkington	Cobb and Harry Leon Wilson
Best Teller of Anecdotes.....	Cobb	Cobb

"Not long ago a group of ten literary men—editors, critics, readers and writers—were dining together. Discussion arose as to the respective and comparative merits of contemporaneous popular writers. It was decided that each man present should set down upon a slip of paper his first,

second and third choices in various specified but widely diversified fields of literary endeavour, and that then the results should be compared. Admirers of Cobb's work will derive a peculiar satisfaction from the outcome. It was found that as a writer of humour he had won first place; that as an all round reporter he had first place; that as a handler of local colour in the qualified sense of a power of apt, swiftly-done, journalistic description, he had first place. He also had first place as a writer of horror yarns. He won second place as a writer of darkey stories. He tied with Harry Leon Wilson for second place as a writer of light humorous fiction, Tarkington being given first place in this category. As a teller of anecdotes he won by acclamation over all contenders. Altogether his name appeared on eight of the ten lists."

Cobb lives at Ossining, New York. He describes himself as lazy, but convinces no one. He likes to go fishing. But he has never written any fish stories.

Books

by Irvin S. Cobb

BACK HOME
COBB'S ANATOMY
THE ESCAPE OF MR. TRIMM
COBB'S BILL OF FARE
ROUGHING IT DE LUXE
EUROPE REVISED

COBB'S FOURTH DIMENSION

PATHS OF GLORY
OLD JUDGE PRIEST
FIBBLE, D.D.
SPEAKING OF OPERATIONS
LOCAL COLOR
SPEAKING OF PRUSSIANS
THOSE TIMES AND THESE
THE GLORY OF THE COMING
THE THUNDERS OF SILENCE
THE LIFE OF THE PARTY
FROM PLACE TO PLACE
"OH, WELL, YOU KNOW HOW WOMEN ARE!"
THE ABANDONED FARMERS
SUNDRY ACCOUNTS
A PLEA FOR OLD CAP COLLIER
ONE THIRD OFF
EATING IN TWO OR THREE LANGUAGES
J. POINDEXTER, COLORED
STICKFULS

Plays:

FUNABASHI
BUSYBODY
BACK HOME
SERGEANT BAGBY
GUILTY AS CHARGED
UNDER SENTENCE

Sources
on Irvin S. Cobb

Who's Who in America.

Who's Cobb and Why? Booklet published by GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY. (Out of print).

Article by Robert H. Davis in the book section of THE NEW YORK HERALD for April 23, 1922.

Robert H. Davis, 280 Broadway, New York.

Chapter XII

PLACES TO GO

i

THE book by Thomas Burke called *More Limehouse Nights* was published in England under the title of *Whispering Windows*. At the time of its publication, Mr. Burke wrote the following:

"The most disconcerting question that an author can be asked, and often is asked, is: 'Why did you write that book?' The questioners do not want an answer to that immediate question; but to the implied question: 'Why don't you write some other kind of book?' To either question there is but one answer: BECAUSE.

"Every writer is thus challenged. The writer of comic stories is asked why he doesn't write something really serious. The novelist is asked why he doesn't write short stories, and the short-story writer is asked why he doesn't write a novel. To me people say, impatiently: 'Why don't you write happy stories about ordinary people?' And the only answer I can give them is: 'Because I can't. I present life as I see it.'

"I am an ordinary man, but I don't understand

ordinary men. I am at a loss with them. But with the people of whom I write I have a fellow-feeling. I know them and their sorrows and their thwarted strivings and I understand their aberrations. I cannot see the romance of the merchant or the glamour of the duke's daughter. They do not permit themselves to be seized and driven by passion and imagination. Instead they are driven by fear, which they have misnamed Common-sense. These people thwart themselves, while my people are thwarted by malign circumstance.

"Often I have taken other men to the dire districts about which I write, and they have remained unmoved; they have seen, in their phrase, nothing to get excited about. Well, one cannot help that kind of person. One cannot give understanding to the man who regards the flogging of children as a joke, or to whom a broken love-story is, in low life, a theme for smoking-room anecdotes.

"Wherever there are human creatures there are beauty and courage and sacrifice. The stories in *Whispering Windows* deal with human creatures, thieves, drunkards, prostitutes, each of whom is striving for happiness in his or her way, and missing it, as most of us do. Each has hidden away some fine streak of character, some mark below which he will not go. And—they are alive. They have met life in its ugliest phases, and fought it.

"My answer, then, to the charge of writing 'loathsome' stories, is that these things happen. To those who say that cruelty and degradation are not fit subjects for fiction, I say that all twists and phases of the human heart are fit subjects for fiction.

"The entertainment of hundreds of thousands with 'healthy' literature is a great and worthy office; but the author can only give out what is in him. If I write of wretched and strange things, it is because these move me most. Happiness needs no understanding; but these darker things—they are kept too much from sensitive eyes and polite ears; and so are too harshly judged upon the world's report. I am no reformer; I have never 'studied' people; and I have no 'purpose,' unless it be illumination.

"What we all need today is illumination; for only through full knowledge can we come to truth —and understanding."

ii

Burke's new book, *The London Spy*, is described by the author as "a book of town travels." Some of the subjects are London street characters, cab shelters, coffee stalls and street entertainers. The range is very wide, for there is a chapter called "In the Streets of Rich Men," which deals with Pall Mall and Piccadilly, as well as a study of a waterside colony, including the results of a

first pipe of opium ("In the Streets of Cyprus"). Mr. Burke tells a good deal about the film world of Soho and is able to give an intimate sketch of Chaplin. Perhaps the most charming of the titles in the book is the chapter called "In the Street of Beautiful Children." This is a study of a street in Stepney, with observations on orphanages and reformatories and "their oppressions of the children of the poor."

Thomas Burke was born in London and seldom lives away from it. He started writing when employed in a mercantile office, and sold his first story when sixteen. He sincerely hopes nobody will ever discover and reprint that story. His early struggles have been recounted in his *Nights in London.* He married Winifred Wells, a young London poet, author of *The Three Crowns.* He lives at Highgate, on the Northern Heights of London. He hates literary society and social functions generally. His chief recreation is wandering about London.

iii

There is very little use in doing a book about China now-a-days unless you can do an unusual book about China; and that, precisely, is what E. G. Kemp has done. *Chinese Mettle* is an unusual book, even to the shape of it (it is nearly square though not taller than the ordinary book). The author has written enough books on China

to cover all the usual ground and, as Sao-Ke Alfred Sze of the Chinese Legation at Washington says in his foreword, Miss Kemp "has wisely neglected the 'show-window' by putting seaports at the end. By acquainting the public with the wealth and beauty of the interior, she reveals to readers the vitality and potential energy, both natural and cultural, of a great nation." Three provinces are particularly described—Yünnan, Kweichow, Hunan—and there are good chapters on the new Chinese woman and the youth of China. This book has, in addition to unusual illustrations, what every good book of its sort should have, an index.

In view of the title of this chapter I have hesitated over mentioning here Albert C. White's *The Irish Free State.* Whether Ireland now should be numbered among the places to go or not is possibly a matter of heredity and sympathies; but at any rate, Ireland is unquestionably a place to read about. Shall we agree that the Irish Free State is one of the best places in the world to go in a book? Then Mr. White's book will furnish up-to-the-minute transportation thither.

The book is written throughout from the standpoint of a vigorous and independent mind. It will annoy extreme partisans of all shades of opinion, and will provoke much discussion. This is especially true of the concluding chapter, in which the author discusses "Some Factors in the Future." The value of the book is enhanced by

the inclusion of the essential documents of the Home Rule struggle, including the four Home Rule Bills of 1886, 1893, 1914 and 1920, and the terms of the Treaty concluded with Sinn Fein.

Whether Russia is a place to go is another of those debatable questions and I feel that the same conclusion holds good. A book is the wisest passport to Russia at present. *Marooned in Moscow*, by Marguerite E. Harrison, is not a new book—in the sense of having been published last week. It remains about the best single book published on Russia under the Soviet government; and I say this with the full recollection that H. G. Wells also wrote a book about Soviet Russia after a visit of fifteen days. Mrs. Harrison spent eighteen months and was part of the time in prison. She is an exceptionally good reporter without prejudices for or against any theory of government—with an eye only for the facts and a word only for an observed fact.

It is good news that *The Secret of the Sahara: Kufara*, by Rosita Forbes, is to be published in a new edition. This Englishwoman, with no assistance but that of native guides, penetrated to Kufara, which lies hidden in the heart of the Libyan desert, a section of the Sahara. This is the region of a fanatical sect of Mohammedans known as the Senussi. No other white woman has ever been known to enter the sacred city of Paj, a gloomy citadel hewn out of rock on the edge of a beautiful valley. *The Secret of the*

Sahara is illustrated with pictures taken by the author, many times under pain of death if she were detected using a camera.

iv

C. E. Andrews is a college professor who saw war service in France and relief administration work in the Balkans. His gifts as a delightful writer will be apparent now that his book of travels, *Old Morocco and the Forbidden Atlas*, is out. This book, unlike the conventional travel book, has the qualities of a good story. There is colour and adventure. There are humorous episodes and there are pictures that seem to be mirrored in the clear lake of a lovely prose. The journey described is through a region of Morocco little traversed by white men and over paths of the Atlas Mountains frequented chiefly by wild tribes and banditti.

Of all places to go, old New York remains, for many, the most appealing. Does it sound queer to recommend for those readers *A Century of Banking in New York: 1822–1922*, by Henry Wysham Lanier? Mr. Lanier is a son of Sidney Lanier, the poet, and those who believe that a chronicle of banking must necessarily be full of dry statistics are invited to read the opening chapter of this book; for Mr. Lanier begins his tale with the yellow fever epidemic of 1822, when all the banks of New York, to say nothing of the

thousands of people, fled "from the city to the country"—that is, from lowermost Broadway to the healthful village of Greenwich. This quality of human rather than statistical interest is paramount throughout the book.

I go back almost four years to call attention again to Frederic A. Fenger's *Alone in the Caribbean*, a book with maps and illustrations from unusual photographs, the narrative of a cruise in a sailing canoe among the Caribbean Islands. . . . It is just a good book.

v

Robin Hood's Barn, by Margaret Emerson Bailey, should be classified, I suppose, as a volume of essays. It seems to me admirably suited for this chapter, since it is all about a pleasant house inhabited by pleasant people—and surely that is a place where everyone wants to go. Margaret Emerson Bailey is describing, I think, an actual house and actual people; not so much their lives as what they make out of life in the collectivism that family life enforces. At least, I seem to get from her book a unity of meaning, the lack of which in our lives, as we live them daily, makes for helplessness and sometimes for despair.

With even more doubt as to the exact "classification," I proceed to speak here and now of L. P. Jacks's book, *The Legends of Smokeover*. Mr. Jacks is well known as the editor of the Hibbert

Journal and a writer of distinction upon philosophical subjects. I should say his specialty is an ability to relate philosophical abstractions to practical, everyday existence. Those familiar with his essays in the Atlantic Monthly will know what I mean. And is the Smokeover of his new book, then, a place to go? It is, if you wish to see our modern age and industrial civilisation expressed in such terms—almost in the terms of fiction—as make its appraisal relatively easy.

I suppose this book might make Mr. Jacks memorable as a satirist. It brings philosophy down from the air, like a peaceful thunderbolt, to shatter the vain illusions we entertain of our material success and our civilised strides forward. The fact that when you have begun to read the book you may experience some difficulty in knowing how to take it is in the book's favour. And why should you complain so long as from the outset you are continuously entertained and amused? You can scarcely complain . . . even though at the end, you find you have been instructed. In a world thickly spotted with Smokeovers, Mr. Jacks's book is a book worth having, worth reading, worth reading again.

Chapter XIII

ALIAS RICHARD DEHAN

i

AT that, I think I am wrong. I think the title of this chapter ought to be "Alias Clotilde Graves."

The problems of literary personality are strange. Some time after the Boer War a woman who had been in newspaper work in London and who had even, at one time, been on the stage under the necessity of earning her living, wrote a novel. The novel happened to be an intensive study of the Boer War, made possible by the fact that the writer was the daughter of a soldier and had spent her early years in barracks. England at that time was interested by the subject of this novel. It sold largely and its author was established by the book.

She was forty-six years old in the year when the book was published. But this was not the striking thing. William De Morgan produced the first of his impressive novels at a much more advanced age. The significant thing was that in publishing her novel, *The Dop Doctor* (American title: *One*

Braver Thing), Clotilde Graves chose the pen name of Richard Dehan, although she was already known as a writer (chiefly for the theatre) under her own name.

I do not know that Miss Graves has ever said anything publicly about her motive in electing the name of Richard Dehan. But I feel that whatever the cause the result was the distinct emergence of a totally different personality. There is no final disassociation between Clotilde Graves and Richard Dehan. Richard Dehan, novelist, steadily employs the material furnished in valuable abundance by Clotilde Graves's life. At the same time the personality of Richard Dehan is so unusual, so gifted, so lavish in its invention and so much at home in surprising backgrounds, that something approaching a psychic explanation of authorship seems called for.

ii

Clotilde Inez Mary Graves was born at Barracks, Buttevant, County Cork, Ireland, on June 3, 1864, third daughter of the late Major W. H. Graves of the Eighteenth Royal Irish Regiment and Antoinette, daughter of Captain George Anthony Deane of Harwich. Thus, the English *Who's Who*.

"She numbers among her ancestors admirals and deans," said The Bookman in 1912.

As the same magazine at about the same time spoke of her as descended from Charles II.'s naval

architect, Admiral Sir Anthony Deane, one wonders if Sir Anthony were not the sum of the admirals and the total of the deans. But no; at any rate in so far as the admirals are concerned, for Miss Graves is also said to be distantly related to Admiral Nelson.

I will give you what The Bookman said in the "Chronicle and Comment" columns of its number for February, 1913:

"Richard Dehan was nine years old when her family emigrated to England from their Irish home. She had seen a good deal of barrack life, and at Southsea, where they went to live, she acquired a large knowledge of both services in the circle of naval and military friends they made there, and this knowledge years afterward she turned to account in *Between Two Thieves*. In 1884, Miss Graves became an art student and worked at the British Museum galleries and the Royal Female School of Art, helping to support herself by journalism of a lesser kind, among other things drawing little pen-and-ink grotesques for the comic papers. By and by she resolved to take to dramatic writing and being too poor, she says, to manage in any other way, she abandoned art and took an engagement in a travelling theatrical company. In 1888 her first chance as a dramatist came. She was again in London, working vigorously at journalism, when some one was needed to write extra lyrics for a pantomime then in preparation. A letter of recommendation from

an editor to the manager ended in Miss Clo Graves writing the pantomime of *Puss in Boots*. Later a tragedy by her, *Nitocris*, was produced for an afternoon at Drury Lane, and another of her plays, *The Mother of Three*, proved not only a literary, but also a material, success."

Her first novel to be signed Richard Dehan being so successful, an English publisher planned to bring out an earlier, minor work, already published as by Clotilde Graves, with "Richard Dehan" on the title-page. The author was stirred to a vigorous and public protest. In the ensuing controversy someone made the point that the proposed reissue would not be more indefensible than the act of a publishing house in bringing out posthumous "books" by O. Henry and dragging from its deserved oblivion Rudyard Kipling's *Abaft the Funnel*.

I do not know whether the publishing of books is a business or a profession. I should say that it has, at one time or another and by one or another individual or concern, been pursued as either or both.

There have certainly been, and probably are, book publishers who not only conduct their business as a business but as a business of a low order. There have been and are book publishers who, though quite necessarily business men, observe an ethical code as nice as that of any of the recognised professions. Perhaps publishing books should qualify as an art, since it has the character-

istics of bringing out what is best or worst in a publisher; and, indeed, if we are to hold that any successful means of self-expression is art, then publishing books has been an art more than once; for unquestionably there are publishers who find self-expression in their work.

This is an interesting subject, but I must not pursue it in this place. Certainly Miss Graves was justified in objecting to the use of her new pen name on work already published under her own name. In her case, as I think, the objection was peculiarly well-founded, because it seems to me that Richard Dehan was a new person. Since Richard Dehan appeared on the title-page of *The Dop Doctor*, there has never been a Clotilde Graves in books. You have only to study the books. *The Dop Doctor* was followed, two years later, by *Between Two Thieves*. This novel has as a leading character Florence Nightingale under the name of Ada Merling. The story was at first to have been called "The Lady With The Lamp"; but the author delayed it for a year and subjected it to a complete rewriting, the result of a new and enlarged conception of the story.

Then came a steady succession of novels by Richard Dehan. I remember with what surprise I read, in 1918, *That Which Hath Wings*, a war story of large dimensions and an incredible amount of exact and easy detail. I remember, too, noting that there was embedded in it a marvellous story for children—an airplane flight in

which a youngster figured—if the publisher chose, with the author's consent, to lift this out of its larger, adult setting. I remember very vividly reading in 1920 a collection of short stories by Richard Dehan, published under the title *The Eve of Pascua.* Pascua is the Spanish word for Easter. I wondered where on earth, unless in Spain itself, the author got the bright colouring for his story.

What I did not realise at the time was that Richard Dehan is like that. Now, smitten to earth by the 500-page novel which he has just completed, I think I understand better. *The Just Steward*, from one standpoint, makes the labours of Gustave Flaubert in *Salaambo* seem trivial. It is known with what passionate tenacity and surprising ardour the French master studied the subject of ancient Carthage, grubbing like the lowliest archæologist to get at his fingertips all those recondite allusions so necessary if he were to move with lightness, assurance and consummate art through the scenes of his novel. But, frankly, one does not expect this of the third daughter of an Irish soldier, an ex-journalist and the author of a Drury Lane pantomime. Nevertheless the erudition is all here. From this standpoint, *The Just Steward* is truly monumental. I will show you a sample or two:

"Beautiful, even with the trench and wall of Diocletian's comparatively recent siege scarring the orchards and vineyards of Lake Mareotis,

splendid even though her broken canals and aqueducts had never been repaired, and part of her western quarter still displayed heaps of calcined ruins where had been temples, palaces and academies, Alexandria lay shimmering under the African sun. . . .

"The vintage of Egypt was in full swing, the figs and dates were being harvested. Swarms of wasps and hornets, armed with formidable stings, yellow-striped like the dreaded nomads of the south and eastern frontiers, greedily sucked the sugary juices of the ripe fruit. Flocks of fig-birds twittered amongst the branches, being like the date-pigeons, almost too gorged to fly. Half naked, dark or tawny skinned, tattooed native labourers, hybrids of mingled races, with heads close-shaven save for a topknot, dwellers in mud-hovels, drudges of the water-wheel, cut down the heavy grape-clusters with sickle-shaped cooper knives.

"Ebony, woolly-haired negroes in clean white breech-cloths, piled up the gathered fruit in tall baskets woven of reeds and lined with leaves. Copts with the rich reddish skins, the long eyes and boldly curving profiles of Egyptian warriors and monarchs as presented on the walls of ancient temples of Libya and the Thebaïd, moved about in leather-girdled blue linen tunics and hide sandals, keeping account of the laden panniers, roped upon the backs of diminutive asses and carried to the winepresses as fast as they were filled.

"The negroes sang as they set snares for fig-birds, and stuffed themselves to the throat with grapes and custard-apples. The fat beccaficoes beloved of the epicurean fell by hundreds into the limed horsehair traps. Greek, Egyptian and negro girls, laughing under garlands of hibiscus, periwinkle and tuberoses, coaxed the fat morsels out of the black men to carry home for a supper treat, while acrobats, comic singers, sellers of cakes, drinks and sweetmeats, with strolling jugglers and jesters and Jewish fortune-tellers of both sexes, assailed the workers and the merry-makers with importunities and made harvest in their own way."

The story is extraordinary. Opening in the Alexandria of the fourth century, it pictures two men, a Roman official and a Jewish steward, who are friends unto death. The second of the four parts or books into which the novel is divided opens in England in 1914. We have to do with John Hazel, the descendant of Hazaël Aben Hazaël, and with the lovely Katharine Forbis, whose ancestor was a Roman, Hazaël Aben Hazaël's sworn friend.

A story of exciting action certainly; it has elements that would ordinarily be called melodramatic—events which are focussed down into realities against the tremendous background of an incredible war. The exotic settings are Egypt and Palestine. It must not be thought that the story is bizarre; the scenes in England, the Eng-

lish slang of John Hazel, as well as the typical figure of Trixie, Lady Wastwood, are utterly modern. I do not find anything to explain how Miss Graves could write such a book; the answer is that Richard Dehan wrote it.

iii

Miss Graves, of whose antecedents and education we already know something, is a Roman Catholic in faith and a Liberal Unionist in politics. She lives at The Towers, Beeding, near Bramber, Sussex. Her recreations are gardening and driving.

But Richard Dehan knows the early history of the Christian Church; he knows military life, strategy, tactics, types; he knows in a most extraordinary way the details of Jewish history and religious observances; he knows perfectly and as a matter of course all about English middle class life; he knows all sorts of things about the East—Turkey and Arabia and those countries.

This is a discrepancy which will bear a good deal of accounting for.

Before I try to account for it I will give you a long passage from *The Just Steward*, describing the visit of Katharine Forbis and her friend to the house of John Hazel, lately of London and now of Alexandria:

"The negro porter who had opened the door, a

huge Ethiopian of ebony blackness, dressed and turbaned in snow-white linen, salaamed deeply to the ladies, displaying as he did so a mouthful of teeth as dazzling in whiteness and sharply-pointed as those of the mosaic dog.

"Then the negro shut the heavy door and locked and bolted it. They heard the car snort and move away as the heavy bolts scrooped in their ancient grooves of stone. But, as they glanced back, towards the entrance, the imperturbable attendant in the black kaftan waved them forward to where another man, exactly like himself in feature, colouring and costume, waited as imperturbably on the threshold of a larger hall beyond. On its right-hand doorpost was affixed a cylinder of metal *repoussée* with an oval piece of glass on that something like a human eye. And the big invisible bees went on humming as industriously and as sleepily as ever:

" 'Bz'zz'z!...Bzz'z!...Bzz m'm'm! . . .'

"Perhaps it was the bees' thick, sleepy droning that made Miss Forbis feel as though she had previously visited this house in a dream, in which, though the mosaic dog had certainly figured, together with a negro who had opened doors, the rows of shoes along the wall, the little creature tripping at her side, the two dark, ultra-respectable men in black tarbushes and kaftans had had no place or part. Only John Hazel had bulked big. He was there, beyond the grave Semitic face of the second Jewish secretary, on the farther side

of the torrent of boiling amber sunshine pouring through a central opening in the roof of the inner hall that succeeded the vestibule of the mosaic Cerberus. An atrium some forty feet in length, paved with squares of black and yellow marble with an oblong pool in the midst of it, upon whose still crystal surface pink and crimson petals of roses had been strewn in patterns, and in the centre of which a triple-jetted fountain played.

"The humming of the unseen bees came louder than ever, from a doorway in the wall upon Katharine's right hand, a wall of black polished marble, decorated with an inlaid ornament in porphyry of yellow and red and pale green. The curtain of dyed and threaded reeds did not hide what lay beyond the doorway. You saw a long, high-pitched whitewashed room, cooled by big wooden electric fans working under the ceiling, and traversed by avenues of creamy-white Chinese matting, running between rows of low native desks, before each of which squatted, on naked or cotton-sock-covered heels, or sat cross-legged upon a square native chintz cushion, a coffee-coloured, almond-eyed young Copt, in a black or blue cotton nightgown, topped with the tarbush of black felt or a dingy-white or olive-brown muslin turban, murmuring softly to himself as he made entries, from right to left, in a huge limp-covered ledger, or deftly fingered the balls of coloured clay strung on the wires of the abacus at his side.

" 'Oh! . . . Wonderful! I'm so Glad you Brought me!'

"Lady Wastwood's emphatic exclamation of pleasure in her surroundings brought cessation in the humming—caused a swivelling of capped or turbanned heads all down the length of three avenues—evoked a simultaneous flash of black Oriental eyes, and white teeth in dusky faces lifted or turned. Then at the upper end of the long counting-house, where three wide glassless windows looked on a sanded palm-garden, and the leather-topped knee-hole tables, roll-top desks, copying ink presses, mahogany revolving-chairs, telephone installations, willow-paper baskets, pewter inkstands and Post Office Directories suggested Cornhill and Cheapside rather than the Orient—one of the olive-faced Jewish head-clerks in kaftans and side-curls coughed—and as though he had pulled a string controlling all the observant faces, every tooth was hidden and every eye discreetly bent on the big limp ledgers again.

"All the Coptic bees were humming sonorously in unison as Katharine went forward to a lofty doorway, framing brightness, where waited to receive her the master of the hive. . . .

"The light beings behind him may have exaggerated his proportions, but he seemed to Trixie the biggest man she had ever seen, and nearly the ugliest. Close-curling coarse black hair capped his high-domed skull, and his stern, powerful, swarthy face, big-nosed and long-chinned, with a

humorous quirk at the corners of the heavy-lipped mouth, that redeemed its sensuousness, was lighted by eyes of the intensest black, burning under heavy beetle-brows. His khaki uniform, though of fine material and admirable cut, was that of a common ranker, and a narrow strip of colours over the heart, and the fact of his left arm being bandaged and slung, intimated to Lady Wastwood that Katharine's Jewish friend had already served with some degree of distinction, and had been wounded in the War. And drawing back with her characteristic inconquerable shyness, as he advanced to Miss Forbis, plainly unconscious of any presence save hers, Trixie's observant green eyes saw him bend his towering head, and sweep his right arm out and down with slow Oriental stateliness, bringing back the supple hand to touch breast, lips and brow. Whether or not he had raised the hem of Katharine's skirt to his lips and kissed it, Lady Wastwood could not definitely determine. She was left with the impression that he had done this thing."

iv

I should have liked to have given, rather than purely descriptive passages, a slice of the complicated and tense action with which the story brims over, but there is the difficulty that such a scene might not be intelligible to one not having read the story from the beginning. I must resist

the tendency to quote any more, having indulged it already to excess, and I am ready to propound my theory of the existence of Richard Dehan.

If you receive a letter from The Towers, Beeding, it will bear a double signature, like this:

RICHARD DEHAN
CLOTILDE GRAVES

Clotilde Graves has become a secondary personality.

There was once a time when there was no Richard Dehan. There now are times when there is no Clotilde Graves.

To a woman in middle age an opportunity presented itself. It was the chance to write a novel around the subject which, as a girl, she had come to know a great deal about—the subject of war. To write about it and gain attention, the novel required a man's signature.

Then there was born in the mind of the woman who purposed to write the novel the idea of a man—of *the* man—who should be the novelist she wanted to be. He should use as by right and from instinct the material which lay inutile at her woman's disposal.

She created Richard Dehan. Perhaps, in so doing, she created another monster like Frankenstein's. I do not know.

Born of necessity and opportunity and a woman's inventiveness, Richard Dehan took over whatever of Clotilde Graves's he could use. He

is now the master. It is, intellectually and spiritually, as if he were the full-grown son of Clotilde Graves. It is a partnership not less intimate than that.

Clotilde Graves—but she does not matter. I think she existed to bring Richard Dehan into the world.

Books
by Richard Dehan

Novels:

THE LOVER'S BATTLE
THE DOP DOCTOR
BETWEEN TWO THIEVES
THE HEADQUARTER RECRUIT
THE COST OF WINGS
THE MAN OF IRON
OFF SANDY HOOK
EARTH TO EARTH
UNDER THE HERMES
THAT WHICH HATH WINGS
A SAILOR'S HOME
THE EVE OF PASCUA
THE VILLA OF THE PEACOCK
THE JUST STEWARD

Plays:

NITOCRIS
DRURY LANE PANTOMIME, PUSS IN BOOTS
DR. AND MRS. NEILL
A MOTHER OF THREE

ALIAS RICHARD DEHAN

A MATCHMAKER
THE BISHOP'S EYE
THE FOREST LOVERS
A MAKER OF COMEDIES
THE BOND OF NINON
A TENEMENT TRAGEDY

Sources
on Richard Dehan

Who's Who [in England].
THE BOOKMAN for February, 1913 (Volume XXXVI, pp. 595-6), also brief mention in THE BOOKMAN for September and October, 1912.
Private Information.

Chapter XIV

WITH FULL DIRECTIONS

i

I HAVE read the book called *Civilization in the United States*, a collection of essays by various Americans, and count the time well spent chiefly because, at the end of the chapter on "Sport," I came upon these words by Ring W. Lardner:

"The best sporting fiction we know of, practically the only sporting fiction an adult may read without fear of stomach trouble, is contained in the collected works of the late Charles E. Van Loan."

This is expert testimony, if there is such a thing. The books Mr. Lardner referred to are published in a five-volume memorial edition consisting of:

FORE! GOLF STORIES
SCORE BY INNINGS: BASEBALL STORIES
OLD MAN CURRY: RACETRACK STORIES
TAKING THE COUNT: PRIZE RING STORIES
BUCK PARVIN: STORIES OF THE MOTION PICTURE GAME

This collected edition was published by George H. Doran Company with the arrangement that every cent above actual cost should go to Mrs. Van Loan and her children.

William T. Tilden, 2nd, was winner of the world's tennis championship in 1920 and 1921. With W. M. Johnston he was winner of the Davis cup in the same years. He also won the United States championship in those years. His book, *The Art of Lawn Tennis*, published in 1921, was republished in 1922. The revised edition included chapters on the winning of the Davis cup and on the world's and the United States championships, on Mrs. Mallory's play in the women's world championship games in France and England, and on Mlle. Lenglen's play in America. Mr. Tilden also added an estimate of the promising youngsters playing tennis and indulged in one or two surprising and radical prophecies.

Twenty Years of Lawn Tennis, by A. Wallis Myers, an English player of distinction, has interesting chapters on play in other countries than America, England and France. An anecdotal volume this, with moments on the Riviera and matches played in South Africa.

After unpreventable delays we have, at last, *The Gist of Golf* by Harry Vardon. Using remarkable photographs, Vardon devotes a chapter to each club and chapters to stance, grip, and swing. Although the chief value of the book is to the player who wants to improve his game,

there is text interesting to everyone familiar with golf; for Vardon gives personal reminiscences covering years of play and illustrative of his instructions.

ii

I suppose the fifty-three photographs, mostly full page ones, are the outstanding feature of *Wild Life in the Tree Tops*, by Captain C. W. R. Knight. This English book, large and flat, shows with the aid of the camera, the merlin pursuing her quarry, young tawny owls in a disused magpie's nest, female noctules and their young, the male kestrel brooding, and a male buzzard that has just brought a rabbit to the younglings in the nest. Plenty of other pictures like these! The chapters deal with the buzzards of the Doone country, the lady's hawk, woodpeckers, brown owls, sparrow-hawks, herons and various other feathered people.

Did you ever read *Lad: A Dog?* Well, anyway, there is a man named Albert Payson Terhune and he and his wife live at a place called "Sunnybank," at Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, where they raise prize winning collie dogs. Photographs come from New Jersey showing Mr. and Mrs. Terhune taking afternoon tea, entirely surrounded by magnificently coated collies. You will also find, if you stray into a bookstore this autumn, a book with a jacket drawn by Charles

Livingston Bull—a jacket from which looms a colossal collie. He carries in a firmly knotted shawl or blanket or sheet or something (the knot clenched between his teeth) a new-born babe. New-born or approximately so. The title of this book is *Further Adventures of Lad.*

Mr. Terhune writes the best dog stories. Read a little bit from the first chapter of *Further Adventures of Lad:*

"Even the crate which brought the new dog to the Place failed somehow to destroy the illusion of size and fierceness. But the moment the crate door was opened the delusion was wrecked by Lad himself.

"Out on to the porch he walked. The ramshackle crate behind him had a ridiculous air of chrysalis from which some bright thing had departed. For a shaft of sunlight was shimmering athwart the veranda floor. And into the middle of the warm bar of radiance Laddie stepped—and stood.

"His fluffy puppy-coat of wavy mahogany-and-white caught a million sunbeams, reflecting them back in tawny-orange glints and in a dazzle as of snow. His forepaws were absurdly small even for a puppy's. Above them the ridging of the stocky leg bones gave as clear promise of mighty size and strength as did the amazingly deep little chest and square shoulders.

"Here one day would stand a giant among dogs, powerful as a timber-wolf, lithe as a cat, as

dangerous to foes as an angry tiger; a dog without fear or treachery; a dog of uncanny brain and great lovingly loyal heart and, withal, a dancing sense of fun. A dog with a soul.

"All this, any canine physiologist might have read from the compact frame, the proud head carriage, the smoulder in the deep-set sorrowful dark eyes. To the casual observer, he was but a beautiful and appealing and wonderfully cuddleable bunch of puppyhood.

"Lad's dark eyes swept the porch, the soft swelling green of the lawn. The flash of fire-blue lake among the trees below. Then he deigned to look at the group of humans at one side of him. Gravely, impersonally, he surveyed them; not at all cowed or strange in his new surroundings; courteously inquisitive as to the twist of luck that had set him down here and as to the people who, presumably, were to be his future companions.

"Perhaps the stout little heart quivered just a bit, if memory went back to his home kennel and to the rowdy throng of brothers and sisters and, most of all, to the soft furry mother against whose side he had nestled every night since he was born. But if so, Lad was too valiant to show homesickness by so much as a whimper. And, assuredly, this House of Peace was infinitely better than the miserable crate wherein he had spent twenty horrible and jouncing and smelly and noisy hours.

"From one to another of the group strayed the

level sorrowful gaze. After the swift inspection Laddie's eyes rest again on the Mistress. For an instant, he stood, looking at her, in that mildly polite curiosity which held no hint of personal interest.

"Then, all at once, his plumy tail began to wave. Into his sad eyes sprang a flicker of warm friendliness. Unbidden—oblivious of everyone else—he trotted across to where the Mistress sat. He put one tiny white paw in her lap and stood thus, looking up lovingly into her face, tail awave, eyes shining.

" 'There's no question whose dog he's going to be,' laughed the Master. 'He's elected you—by acclamation.' "

iii

Not content with being the husband of Margaret Sangster, C. M. Sheridan has written *The Stag Cook Book*. I would have it understood that this is an honest-to-goodness cook-book, although I readily confess that there is plenty of humour throughout its pages. Mr. Sheridan has acquired various unusual and unreplaceable recipes—I believe he secured from Wladislaw Benda, the illustrator, a rare and secret formula for the preparation of a species of Hungarian or Polish pastry. Now, as every housewife knows, and as no man except a Frenchman or somebody like that knows, the preparation of pastry is an

intricate art. Simply to make ordinary French pastry requires innumerable rollings to incredible thinnesses; besides which the pastry has to be chilled; but there is more than that to this recondite substance which Mr. Benda, probably under the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, surrendered to Mr. Sheridan. The pastry in question has to be executed with the aid of geometrical designs. Mr. Sheridan has supplied the necessary front elevation and working plans. He shows you where you fold along the line from A to B—in other words, along the dotted line. Thus no man using this unique cook-book can go wrong any more than his wife can go wrong when making a new dress according to Pictorial Review or McCall's or Delineator patterns.

On the other hand, women remain still chiefly responsible for the food we eat. Elizabeth A. Monaghan's *What to Eat and How to Prepare It* is an orthodox cook-book in contrast with Mr. Sheridan's daring adventure.

iv

Large numbers of people still play games. I do not mean cards or tennis or golf or any of the famous outdoor and indoor sports, but just games, the sort of things that are sometimes called stunts and that make the life of the party—or, by their absence or failure, rob the evening gathering of all its vitality. For the people who play games,

Edna Geister is the one best bet. Edna Geister knows all about stunts and games and parties and she brims over with clever ideas for the hostess or recreation leader. You will find them in her book *Ice-breakers and the Ice-breaker Herself*. The second section of this book, *The Ice-breaker Herself*, has been bound separately for the convenience of those already owning *Ice Breakers*. Miss Geister's latest book, *It Is to Laugh*, was written primarily for adults because there is so much material already available for the recreation of children. Nevertheless almost every one of the games and stunts described in *It Is to Laugh* can be used for children. There are games for large groups and small groups, games for the family, for dinner parties, for community affairs and for almost any kind of social gathering, with one chapter devoted to out-of-door and picnic programmes.

Playing the piano is not a game, at least not as Mark Hambourg, the pianist and composer, plays it. Hambourg, though born in South Russia in 1879, the eldest son of the late Professor Michel Hambourg, has for years been a naturalised Englishman. In fact, he married in 1907 the Honourable Dorothea Mackenzie, daughter of Lord Muir Mackenzie. And the pair have four daughters. Mark Hambourg was a pupil of Leschetitzky in Vienna, where he obtained the Liszt scholarship in 1894. He has made concert appearances all over the world, his third American tour falling

in 1907, and his first Canadian tour in 1910.

Mark Hambourg's book is called *How to Play the Piano* and the text is helped with practical illustrations and diagrams and a complete compendium of five-finger exercises, scales, arpeggi, thirds and octaves as practised by Hambourg.

v

Those who read The Bookman will not need to be told that the articles by Robert Cortes Holliday on *Writing as a Business: A Practical Guide for Authors*, will constitute an exceptional book. The great point about Mr. Holliday's chapters, which have been written in collaboration with Alexander Van Rensselaer, is that they are disinterested. There has been an immense amount of printed matter, some of it in book form, telling of the problems that confront the writer, especially the young beginner. As a rule, the underlying motive was to induce people to write so that someone else might make money out of their efforts, whether the writers did or not. So-called correspondence schools in the art of writing, so-called literary bureaus, interested individuals anxious to earn "commissions," and sometimes individuals who purported to be publishers have for many years carried on a continuous campaign at the expense of persons who did not know how to write but who fancied they could write and who, above everything, craved to

write—craved seeing themselves in print and hearing themselves referred to as "authors" or "writers." It would take a statistician versed in all manner of mysteries and calculations to tell how many people have been deluded by this stuff, and how much money has been nuzzled out of them. The time was certainly here for someone in a position to tell the truth to speak up.

And of Mr. Holliday's qualifications there is no question. He has had to do with books and authors and book publishing for years. He was, as his readers know, for a number of years in the Scribner bookstore. He was with Doubleday, Page & Company at Garden City; he was with George H. Doran Company, serving not only as editor of The Bookman but acting in other editorial capacities. He is now connected with Henry Holt & Company. As an author he is amply established. Therefore, when he tells about writing and book publishing and bookselling, and when he discusses such subjects as "Publishing Your Own Book," his statements are most thoroughly documented. The important thing, however, is that Mr. Holliday is disinterested, he has no axe to grind in the advice he gives; although the impressive thing about his book is the absence of advice and the continual presentation of unvarnished facts. After all, confronted with the facts, the literary aspirant of ordinary intelligence must and should reach his own conclusions as regards what he wants to do

and how best to essay it. This is a sample of the kind of straightforwardness to which Mr. Holliday adheres:

"An experienced writer 'on his own' may earn a couple of hundred dollars or so in one week, and for several weeks afterward average something like $14.84. The beginner-writer should not consider that he has 'arrived' when he has sold one story, or even several; it may be a year before he places another. And the future of a writer who may be having a very fair success now is not any too secure. Public taste changes. New orders come in. The kind of thing which took so well yesterday may be quite out of fashion tomorrow.

"There is among people generally much misconception as to the profits ordinarily derived by the author from the publication of a book. The price of a novel today is about two dollars. Usually the author receives a royalty of about fifteen cents a copy on the first two thousand copies sold, and about twenty cents on each copy thereafter. A novel which sold upward of 50,000 copies would bring the author something like $10,000. Many men make as much as $10,000 by a year's work at some other business or profession than authorship. But authors who make that amount in a year, or anything near that amount, are exceedingly rare. A book is regarded by the publisher as highly successful if it sells from five to ten thousand copies. Far and away the greater number of books published do not sell as many

as 1,500 copies. Many far less. A recently published book, which received a very cordial 'press,' has had an uncommon amount of publicity, and the advertisements of which announce that it is in its 'fourth printing,' has, after about half a year, earned for its author perhaps $1,000. Its sale now in active measure is over. An author is fairly fortunate who receives as much as $500 or $600 from the sale of his book. I recall an excellent story published something over a year ago which was much praised by many reviewers. It took the author probably the better part of a year to write it. He was then six months or more getting it accepted. He has not been able to place much of anything since. At the end, then, of two years and a half he has received from his literary labors about $110."

Mr. Van Rensselaer has greatly enhanced the usefulness of *Writing as a Business* by the addition of very complete bibliographies.

Illumination and Its Development in the Present Day, by Sidney Farnsworth, has nothing to do with street or indoor lighting but has a great deal to do with lettering and illuminating manuscripts. Mr. Farnsworth traces the growth of illumination from its birth, showing, by means of numerous diagrams and drawings, its gradual development through the centuries from mere writing to the elaborate poster work and commercial lettering of the present day. Although other books have already been written on this fascinating subject,

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

Mr. Farnsworth breaks new ground in many directions; he treats the matter from the modern standpoint in a manner which makes his work invaluable not only to students of the art, but also to the rapidly-growing public interested in what has hitherto been a somewhat exclusive craft. The book is well illustrated.

Chapter XV

FRANK SWINNERTON: ANALYST OF LOVERS

i

IT is as an analyst of lovers, I think, that Frank Swinnerton claims and holds his place among those whom we still sometimes call the younger novelists of England.

I do not say this because his fame was achieved at a bound with *Nocturne*, but because all his novels show a natural preoccupation with the theme of love between the sexes. Usually it is a pair of young lovers or contrasted pairs; but sometimes this is interestingly varied, as in *September*, where we have a study of love that comes to a woman in middle life.

The unique character of *Nocturne* makes it very hard to write about Swinnerton. It is true that Arnold Bennett wrote: "I am prepared to say to the judicious reader unacquainted with Swinnerton's work, 'Read *Nocturne*,' and to stand or fall, and to let him stand or fall by the result." At the same time, though the rule is that we must judge an artist by his finest work and a genius by his greatest masterpiece, it is not entirely just

to estimate the living writer by a single unique performance, an extraordinary piece of virtuosity, which *Nocturne* unquestionably is. For anyone who wishes to understand and appreciate Swinnerton, I would recommend that he begin with *Coquette*, follow it with *September*, follow that with *Shops and Houses* and then read *Nocturne*. That is, I would have made this recommendation a few months ago, but so representative of all sides of Swinnerton's talent is his new novel, *The Three Lovers*, that I should now prefer to say to anyone unacquainted with Swinnerton: "Begin with *The Three Lovers*." And after that I would have him read *Coquette* and the other books in the order I have named. After he had reached and finished *Nocturne*, I would have him turn to the several earlier novels—*The Happy Family*, *On the Staircase*, and *The Chaste Wife*.

ii

The Three Lovers, a full-length novel which Swinnerton finished in Devonshire in the spring of 1922, is a story of human beings in conflict, and it is also a picture of certain phases of modern life. A young and intelligent girl, alone in the world, is introduced abruptly to a kind of life with which she is unfamiliar. Thereafter the book shows the development of her character and her struggle for the love of the men to whom she is most attracted. The book steadily moves

FRANK SWINNERTON

through its earlier chapters of introduction and growth to a climax that is both dramatic and moving. It opens with a characteristic descriptive passage from which I take a few sentences:

"It was a suddenly cold evening towards the end of September. . . . The street lamps were sharp brightnesses in the black night, wickedly revealing the naked rain-swept paving-stones. It was an evening to make one think with joy of succulent crumpets and rampant fires and warm slippers and noggins of whisky; but it was not an evening for cats or timid people. The cats were racing about the houses, drunken with primeval savagery; the timid people were shuddering and looking in distress over feebly hoisted shoulders, dreadfully prepared for disaster of any kind, afraid of sounds and shadows and their own forgotten sins. . . . The wind shook the window-panes; soot fell down all the chimneys; trees continuously rustled as if they were trying to keep warm by constant friction and movement."

The imagination which sees in the movement of trees an endeavour to keep warm is not less sharp in its discernment of human beings. I will give one other passage, a conversation between Patricia Quin, the heroine, and another girl:

" 'Do you mean he's in love with you?' asked Patricia. 'That seems to be what's the matter.'

" 'Oho, it takes two to be in love,' scornfully cried Amy. 'And I'm not in love with him.'

" 'But he's your friend.'

" 'That's just it. He won't recognise that men and women *can* be friends. He's a very decent fellow; but he's full of this sulky jealousy, and he glowers and sulks whenever any other man comes near me. Well, that's not my idea of friendship.'

" 'Nor mine,' echoed Patricia, trying to reconstruct her puzzled estimate of their relations. 'But couldn't you stop that? Surely, if you put it clearly to him . . .'

"Amy interrupted with a laugh that was almost shrill. Her manner was coldly contemptuous.

" 'You *are* priceless!' she cried. 'You say the most wonderful things.'

" 'Well, *I* should.'

" 'I wonder.' Amy moved about, collecting the plates. 'You see . . . some day I shall marry. And in a weak moment I said probably I'd marry him.'

" 'Oh, Amy! Of *course* he's jealous!' Swiftly, Patricia did the young man justice.

" 'I didn't give him any right to be. I told him I'd changed my mind. I've told him lots of times that probably I sha'n't marry him.'

" 'But you keep him. Amy! You do encourage him.' Patricia was stricken afresh with a generous impulse of emotion on Jack's behalf. 'I mean, by not telling him straight out. Surely you can't keep a man waiting like that? I wonder he doesn't *insist*.'

" 'Jack insist!' Amy was again scornful. 'Not he!'

"There was a moment's pause. Innocently, Patricia ventured upon a charitable interpretation.

" 'He must love you very much. But, Amy, if you don't love him.'

" 'What's love got to do with marriage?' asked Amy, with a sourly cynical air.

" 'Hasn't it—everything?' Patricia was full of sincerity. She was too absorbed in this story to help Amy to clear the table; but on finding herself alone in the studio while the crockery was carried away to the kitchen she mechanically shook the crumbs behind the gas-fire and folded the napkin. This was the most astonishing moment of her day.

"Presently Amy returned, and sat in the big armchair, while, seated upon the podger and leaning back against the wall, Patricia smoked a cigarette.

" 'You see, the sort of man one falls in love with doesn't make a good husband,' announced Amy, as patiently as if Patricia had been in fact a child. She persisted in her attitude of superior wisdom in the world's ways. 'It's all very well; but a girl ought to be able to live with any man she fancies, and then in the end marry the safe man for a . . . well, for life, if she likes.'

"Patricia's eyes were opened wide.

" 'I shouldn't like that,' she said. 'I don't think the man would either.'

" 'Bless you, the men all *do* it,' cried Amy, contemptuously. 'Don't make any mistake about that.'

" 'I don't believe it,' said Patricia. 'Do you mean that my father—or *your* father . . .?'

" 'Oh, I don't know. I meant, nowadays. Most of the people you saw last night are living together or living with other people.'

"Patricia was aware of a chill.

" 'But *you've* never,' she urged. 'I've never.'

" 'No.' Amy was obviously irritated by the personal application. 'That's just it. I say we *ought* to be free to do what we like. Men do what they like.'

" 'D'you think Jack has lived with other girls?'

" 'My dear child, how do I know? I should hope he has.'

" 'Hope! Amy, you do make me feel a prig.'

" 'Perhaps you are one. Oh, I don't know. I'm sick of thinking, thinking, thinking about it all. I never get any peace.'

" 'Is there somebody you *want* to live with?'

" 'No. I wish there was. Then I should *know*.'

" 'I wonder if you would know,' said Patricia, in a low voice. 'Amy, do you really know what love is? Because I don't. I've sometimes let men kiss me, and it doesn't seem to matter in the least. I don't particularly want to kiss them, or to be

kissed. I've never seen anything in all the flirtation that goes on in dark corners. It's amusing once or twice; but it becomes an awful bore. The men don't interest you. The thought of living with any of them just turns me sick.' "

iii

The analysis, in *The Three Lovers*, of Patricia Quin is done with that simplicity, quiet deftness and inoffensive frankness which is the hallmark of Mr. Swinnerton's fiction. And, coming at last to *Nocturne*, I fall back cheerfully upon the praise accorded that novel by H. G. Wells in his preface to it. Said Mr. Wells:

"Such a writer as Mr. Swinnerton sees life and renders it with a steadiness and detachment and patience quite foreign to my disposition. He has no underlying motive. He sees and tells. His aim is the attainment of that beauty which comes with exquisite presentation. Seen through his art, life is seen as one sees things through a crystal lens, more intensely, more completed, and with less turbidity. There the business begins and ends for him. He does not want you or anyone to do anything.

"Mr. Swinnerton is not alone among recent writers in this clear detached objectivity. But Mr. Swinnerton, like Mr. James Joyce, does not repudiate the depths for the sake of the surface.

His people are not splashes of appearance, but living minds. Jenny and Emmy in this book are realities inside and out; they are imaginative creatures so complete that one can think with ease of Jenny ten years hence or of Emmy as a baby. The fickle Alf is one of the most perfect Cockneys —a type so easy to caricature and so hard to get true—in fiction. If there exists a better writing of vulgar lovemaking, so base, so honest, so touchingly mean and so touchingly full of the craving for happiness than this, I do not know of it. Only a novelist who has had his troubles can understand fully what a dance among china cups, what a skating over thin ice, what a tight-rope performance is achieved in this astounding chapter. A false note, one fatal line, would have ruined it all. On the one hand lay brutality; a hundred imitative louts could have written a similar chapter brutally, with the soul left out, we have loads of such 'strong stuff' and it is nothing; on the other side was the still more dreadful fall into sentimentality, the tear of conscious tenderness, the redeeming glimpse of 'better things' in Alf or Emmy that could at one stroke have converted their reality into a genteel masquerade. The perfection of Alf and Emmy is that at no point does a 'nature's gentleman' or a 'nature's lady' show through and demand our refined sympathy. It is only by comparison with this supreme conversation that the affair of Keith and Jenny seems to fall short of perfection. But that also is at last

perfected, I think, by Jenny's final, 'Keith . . . Oh, Keith! . . .'

"Above these four figures again looms the majestic invention of 'Pa.' Every reader can appreciate the truth and humour of Pa, but I doubt if anyone without technical experience can realise how the atmosphere is made and completed, and rounded off by Pa's beer, Pa's meals, and Pa's accident, how he binds the bundle and makes the whole thing one, and what an enviable triumph his achievement is.

"But the book is before the reader and I will not enlarge upon its merits further. Mr. Swinnerton has written four or five other novels before this one, but none of them compares with it in quality. His earlier books were strongly influenced by the work of George Gissing; they have something of the same fatigued greyness of texture and little of the same artistic completeness and intense vision of *Nocturne*.

"This is a book that will not die. It is perfect, authentic and alive. Whether a large and immediate popularity will fall to it, I cannot say, but certainly the discriminating will find it and keep it and keep it alive. If Mr. Swinnerton were never to write another word I think he might count on this much of his work living, when many of the more portentous reputations of today may have served their purpose in the world and become no more than fading names."

iv

Arnold Bennett has described Swinnerton personally in a way no one else is likely to surpass. I will prefix a few elemental facts which he has neglected and then will let him have his say.

Frank Arthur Swinnerton was born in Wood Green, England, in 1884, the youngest son of Charles Swinnerton and Rose Cottam. He married, a few years ago, Helen Dircks, a poet; her slim little book of verse, *Passenger*, was published with a preface by Mr. Swinnerton. His first three novels Swinnerton destroyed. His first novel to be published was *The Merry Heart*. It is interesting to know that Floyd Dell was the first American to appreciate Swinnerton. I make way for Mr. Bennett, who says:

"One day perhaps eight or nine years ago I received a novel entitled *The Casement*. The book was accompanied by a short, rather curt note from the author, Frank Swinnerton, politely indicating that if I cared to read it he would be glad, and implying that if I didn't care to read it, he should endeavour still to survive. I would quote the letter but I cannot find it—no doubt for the reason that all my correspondence is carefully filed on the most modern filing system. I did not read *The Casement* for a long time. Why should I consecrate three irrecoverable hours or so to the work of a man as to whom I had no credentials? Why should I thus introduce foreign matter into

the delicate cogwheels of my programme of reading? However, after a delay of weeks, heaven in its deep wisdom inspired me with a caprice to pick up the volume.

"I had read, without fatigue but on the other hand without passionate eagerness, about a hundred pages before the thought occurred suddenly to me: 'I do not remember having yet come across one single ready-made phrase in this story.' Such was my first definable thought concerning Frank Swinnerton. I hate ready-made phrases, which in my view—and in that of Schopenhauer—are the sure mark of a mediocre writer. I began to be interested. I soon said to myself: 'This fellow has a distinguished style.' I then perceived that the character-drawing was both subtle and original, the atmosphere delicious, and the movement of the tale very original, too. The novel stirred me—not by its powerfulness, for it did not set out to be powerful—but by its individuality and distinction. I thereupon wrote to Frank Swinnerton. I forget entirely what I said. But I know that I decided that I must meet him.

"When I came to London, considerably later, I took measures to meet him, at the Authors' Club. He proved to be young; I daresay twenty-four or twenty-five—medium height, medium looks, medium clothes, somewhat reddish hair, and lively eyes. If I had seen him in a motorbus I should never have said, 'A remarkable chap'—no more than if I had seen myself in a motorbus. My im-

pressions of the interview were rather like my impressions of the book: at first somewhat negative, and only very slowly becoming positive. He was reserved, as became a young author; I was reserved, as became an older author; we were both reserved, as became Englishmen. Our views on the only important thing in the world—that is to say, fiction—agreed, not completely, but in the main; it would never have done for us to agree completely. I was as much pleased by what he didn't say as by what he said; quite as much by the indications of the stock inside the shop as by the display in the window. The interview came to a calm close. My knowledge of him acquired from it amounted to this, that he held decided and righteous views upon literature, that his heart was not on his sleeve, and that he worked in a publisher's office during the day and wrote for himself in the evenings.

"Then I saw no more of Swinnerton for a relatively long period. I read other books of his. I read *The Young Idea*, and *The Happy Family*, and, I think, his critical work on George Gissing. *The Happy Family* marked a new stage in his development. It has some really piquant scenes, and it revealed that minute knowledge of middle-class life in the nearer suburbs of London, and that disturbing insight into the hearts and brains of quite unfashionable girls, which are two of his principal gifts. I read a sketch of his of a commonplace crowd walking around a bandstand

which brought me to a real decision as to his qualities. The thing was like life, and it was bathed in poetry.

"Our acquaintance proceeded slowly, and I must be allowed to assert that the initiative which pushed it forward was mine. It made a jump when he spent a week-end in the Thames Estuary on my yacht. If any reader has a curiosity to know what my yacht is not like, he should read the striking yacht chapter in *Nocturne*. I am convinced that Swinnerton evolved the yacht in *Nocturne* from my yacht; but he ennobled, magnified, decorated, enriched and bejewelled it till honestly I could not recognise my wretched vessel. The yacht in *Nocturne* is the yacht I want, ought to have, and never shall have. I envy him the yacht in *Nocturne*, and my envy takes a malicious pleasure in pointing out a mistake in the glowing scene. He anchors his yacht in the middle of the Thames—as if the tyrannic authorities of the Port of London would ever allow a yacht, or any other craft, to anchor in midstream!

"After the brief cruise our friendship grew rapidly. I now know Swinnerton—probably as well as any man knows him; I have penetrated into the interior of the shop. He has done several things since I first knew him—rounded the corner of thirty, grown a beard, under the orders of a doctor, and physically matured. Indeed, he looks decidedly stronger than in fact he is—he was never able to pass the medical examination

for the army. He is still in the business of publishing, being one of the principal personages in the ancient and well-tried firm of Chatto & Windus, the English publishers of Swinburne and Mark Twain. He reads manuscripts, including his own—and including mine. He refuses manuscripts, though he did accept one of mine. He tells authors what they ought to do and ought not to do. He is marvellously and terribly particular and fussy about the format of the books issued by his firm. Questions as to fonts of type, width of margins, disposition of title-pages, tint and texture of bindings really do interest him. And misprints—especially when he has read the proofs himself—give him neuralgia and even worse afflictions. Indeed he is the ideal publisher for an author.

"Nevertheless, publishing is only a side-line of his. He still writes for himself in the evenings and at week-ends—the office never sees him on Saturdays.

"Frank Swinnerton has other gifts. He is a surpassingly good raconteur. By which I do not signify that the man who meets Swinnerton for the first, second or third time will infallibly ache with laughter at his remarks. Swinnerton only blossoms in the right atmosphere; he must know exactly where he is; he must be perfectly sure of his environment, before the flower uncloses. And he merely relates what he has seen, what he has taken part in. The narrations would be naught

if he were not the narrator. His effects are helped by the fact that he is an excellent mimic and by his utter realistic mercilessness. But like all first-class realists he is also a romantic, and in his mercilessness there is a mysterious touch of fundamental benevolence—as befits the attitude of one who does not worry because human nature is not something different from what it actually is. Lastly, in this connection, he has superlatively the laugh known as the 'infectious laugh.' When he laughs everybody laughs, everybody has to laugh. There are men who tell side-splitting tales with the face of an undertaker—for example, Irvin Cobb. There are men who can tell side-splitting tales and openly and candidly rollick in them from the first word; and of these latter is Frank Swinnerton. But Frank Swinnerton can be more cruel than Irvin Cobb. Indeed, sometimes when he is telling a story, his face becomes exactly like the face of Mephistopheles in excellent humour with the world's sinfulness and idiocy.

"Swinnerton's other gift is the critical. It has been said that an author cannot be at once a first-class critic and a first-class creative artist. To which absurdity I reply: What about William Dean Howells? And what about Henry James, to name no other names? Anyhow, if Swinnerton excels in fiction he also excels in literary criticism. The fact that the literary editor of the Manchester Guardian wrote and asked him to write literary criticism for the Manchester Guar-

dian will perhaps convey nothing to the American citizen. But to the Englishman of literary taste and experience it has enormous import. The Manchester Guardian publishes the most fastidious and judicious literary criticism in Britain.

"I recall that once when Swinnerton was in my house I had there also a young military officer with a mad passion for letters and a terrific ambition to be an author. The officer gave me a manuscript to read. I handed it over to Swinnerton to read, and then called upon Swinnerton to criticise it in the presence of both of us. 'Your friend is very kind,' said the officer to me afterward, 'but it was a frightful ordeal.'

"The book on George Gissing I have already mentioned. But it was Swinnerton's work on R. L. Stevenson that made the trouble in London. It is a destructive work. It is bland and impartial, and not bereft of laudatory passages, but since its appearance Stevenson's reputation has never been the same."

Books

by Frank Swinnerton

THE MERRY HEART
THE YOUNG IDEA
THE CASEMENT
THE HAPPY FAMILY
GEORGE GISSING: A CRITICAL STUDY
R. L. STEVENSON: A CRITICAL STUDY

SWINNERTON: ANALYST OF LOVERS

ON THE STAIRCASE
THE CHASTE WIFE
NOCTURNE
SHOPS AND HOUSES
SEPTEMBER
COQUETTE
THE THREE LOVERS

Sources
on Frank Swinnerton

Who's Who [In England].
Frank Swinnerton: Personal Sketches by Arnold Bennett, H. G. Wells, Grant Overton. Booklet published by GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY, 1920.
Private Information.

Chapter XVI

AN ARMFUL OF NOVELS, WITH NOTES ON THE NOVELISTS

i

THE quiet, the calm, the extreme individualism, and the easy-going self-content of my birthplace and early habitat—the Eastern Shore of Maryland, have been, I fear, the dominating influences of my life," writes Sophie Kerr. "Thank heaven, I had a restless, energetic, and very bad-tempered father to leaven them, a man with a biting tongue and a kind heart, a keen sense of the ridiculous and a passion for honesty in speech and action. I, the younger of his two children, was his constant companion. I tagged after him, every day and all day. Even when I was very small he interested me—and very few fathers ever really interest their children.

"The usual life of a girl in a small semi-Southern town was mine. I learned to cook, I made most of my own frocks, I embroidered excessively, I played the violin worse than any other person in the world, I went away to college and I came back again. I wasn't a popular girl so-

cially for two reasons. I had inherited my father's gift of sarcasm, and there was the even greater handicap of a beautiful, popular, socially malleable older sister. Beside her I was nowhere.

"But I wanted to write, so I didn't care. I got my father to buy me a second-hand typewriter, and learned to run it with two fingers. And I wrote. I even sold some of the stuff. The Country Gentleman bought one of my first stories, and the Ladies' World bought another. This was glorious.

"Then I got a job on the Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph, an afternoon newspaper owned by Senator Oliver. Later I went to The Gazette-Times, the morning paper also owned by the Senator. A few years later I came to New York and found a place on the staff of the Woman's Home Companion, eventually becoming Managing Editor. Two years ago I resigned my editorial job to give all my time to writing. Of course I had been writing pretty steadily anyway, but holding my job too.

"I had expected, when I gave up office work, to find my leisure time an embarrassment. I planned so many things to do, how I would see all my friends often, how I would travel, read, do all sorts of delightful things that double work had before made impossible. But I've done none of them. I haven't nearly as much time as I had when I hadn't any time at all, and that's the honest truth.

"If only I could arrange a multiple existence—one life for work; one for the machinery of life, housekeeping, getting clothes made, shopping; one for seeing my friends, travel, visiting; one life for the other diversions such as music, the theatre, clubs, politics, one life for just plain loafing. Now that would be wonderful. But to crowd it all into twenty-four hours a day—no, too much of it gets squeezed out.

"What do I like the most? Comfort, I think. And old painted satinwood, and cats and prize-fights, and dancing, and Spanish shawls, and looking at the ocean, and having my own way. And I dislike argument, and perfume, and fat women, and people who tell the sort of lies that simply insult your intelligence, and men who begin letters 'Dear Lady,' and long earrings, and intolerance."

All of which is excellent preparation for the reader of Sophie Kerr's new novel, *One Thing Is Certain*. Those who read her *Painted Meadows* will expect and will find in this new novel the same charming background, but they will find a much more dramatic story. Since the novel is one of surprise, with an event at its close which throws everything that went before in a new, a curious, a startling and profoundly significant light, I cannot indulge in any further description of it in this place. But I do wish to quote some sentences from a letter Sophie Kerr wrote me:

"I wanted to show that when lives get out of

plumb, the way to straighten them is not with a violent gesture. That when we do seize them, and try to jerk them straight again, we invariably let ourselves in for long years of unhappiness and remorse. Witness Louellen. In two desperate attempts . . . she tries to change the whole current and colour of her life."

So much for the essential character of the story, but there is a question in my mind as to what, in the story, readers will consider the true essential! I think for very many it will not be the action, unusual and dramatic as that is, but the picture of a peculiar community, one typical of Maryland's Eastern Shore, where we have farmer folk in whom there lives the spirit and tradition of a landed aristocracy. The true essential with such readers, will be the individuals who are drawn with such humour and skill, the mellowness of the scene; even such a detail as the culinary triumph that was Louellen's wedding dinner. A marvellous and incomparable meal! One reads of it, his mouth watering and his stomach crying out.

ii

The House of Five Swords, by Tristram Tupper, is a gallant representative of those novels which we are beginning to get in the inevitable reaction from such realism as *Main Street* and *Moon-Calf*, a romantic story of age and youth, of love and hate, of bitter unyielding hardness, and

of melting pity and tenderness. It begins with the Robin, age seven, with burnished curls, viewing with awestruck delight five polished swords against the shining dark wall in Colonial House, where she had gone to deliver the Colonel's boots! She forgot the boots. She lifted two of the swords from the wall, crossed them on the floor and danced the sword dance of Scotland. From the doorway a white-haired old figure watched with narrowed eyes and tightened mouth. Then the storm broke. . . .

The House of Five Swords is Mr. Tupper's first novel. A native of Virginia, he has done newspaper work, has tramped a good deal and was fooling with the study of law when American troops were ordered to the Mexican border. After that experience he went overseas. On his return from the war, he tried writing and met with rapid success.

iii

Readers of Baroness Orczy's novels will welcome *Nicolette.*

This is essentially a love story, with the scene laid in the mountains of Provence in the early days of the Restoration of King Louis XVIII to the throne of France. An ancient half-ruined château perches among dwarf olives and mimosa, orange and lemon groves. There is a vivid contrast between the prosperity of Jaume Deydier, a rich peasant-proprietor, and the grinding poverty

of the proud and ancient family of de Ventadour, whose last scion, Bertrand, goes to seek fortune in Paris and there becomes affianced to a wealthy and beautiful heiress. Nicolette, the daughter of Jaume Deydier, whose ancestor had been a lackey in the service of the Comte de Ventadour, is passionately in love with Bertrand, but a bitter feud keeps the lovers for long apart.

There will be a new novel this autumn, *Ann and Her Mother*, by O. Douglas, whose *Penny Plain* gave great pleasure to its readers. "Penny plain," if you remember, was the way Jean described the lot of herself and her brothers whom she mothered in the Scottish cottage; but matters were somewhat changed when romance crossed the threshold in the person of the Honourable Pamela and a bitter old millionaire who came to claim the house as his own.

Ann and Her Mother is the story of a Scotch family as seen through the eyes of the mother and her daughter. The author of *Penny Plain* and *Ann and Her Mother* is a sister of John Buchan, author of *The Thirty-nine Steps*, *The Path of the King*, and many other books.

December Love, by Robert Hichens, will have a greater popularity than any of his novels since *The Garden of Allah*. It is a question whether this uncannily penetrative study of power and the need for love of a woman of sixty does not surpass *The Garden of Allah*. In Lady Sellingworth, Mr. Hichens is dealing with a brilliant woman.

The theme is daring and calls for both skill and delicacy. Of the action, one really should not say very much, lest one spoil the book for the reader. The loss of the Sellingworth jewels in Paris had caused a sensation in the midst of which Lady Sellingworth was silent. She declined to discuss the disappearance of the jewels. There followed the advent at No. 4 Berkeley Square of Alick Craven, a man of thirty, vigorous, attractive and decidedly a somebody. But inexplicably —at any rate without explanation—Lady Sellingworth retired from society when Craven appeared.

Tell England by Ernest Raymond is a novel which has been sensationally successful in England. It is a war story and I will give you some of the opening paragraphs of the "Prologue by Padre Monty":

"In the year that the Colonel died he took little Rupert to see the swallows fly away. I can find no better beginning than that.

"When there devolved upon me as a labour of love the editing of Rupert Ray's book, *Tell England*, I carried the manuscript to my room one bright autumn afternoon and read it during the fall of a soft evening, till the light failed, and my eyes burned with the strain of reading in the dark. I could hardly leave his ingenuous tale to rise and turn on the gas. Nor, perhaps, did I want such artificial brightness. There are times when one prefers the twilight. Doubtless the tale held me fascinated because it revealed the schooldays of

those boys whom I met in their young manhood and told afresh that wild old Gallipoli adventure which I shared with them. Though, sadly enough, I take Heaven to witness that I was not the idealised creature whom Rupert portrays. God bless them, how these boys will idealise us!

"Then again, as Rupert tells you, it was I who suggested to him the writing of his story. And well I recall how he demurred, asking:

" 'But what am I to write about?' For he was always diffident and unconscious of his power.

" 'Is Gallipoli nothing to write about?' I retorted. 'And you can't have spent five years at a great public school like Kensington without one or two sensational things. Pick them out and let us have them. For whatever the modern theorists say, the main duty of a story-teller is certainly to tell stories.' "

This prologue is followed by the novel which begins with English public school life in the fashion of *Sonia* and other novels American readers are familiar with. The main theme of the book is Gallipoli.

The new novel by J. E. Buckrose is *A Knight Among Ladies*. Mrs. Buckrose says that the character of Sid Dummeris in this book is modelled upon an actual person. "He did actually live in a remote country place where I used to stay a great deal when I was a child and as he has been gone twenty years, I thought I might employ my exact

memories of him without hurting anyone." This was in answer to questions asked by The Bookman (London) of a number of English writers. The London Bookman wanted to find out if novelists generally drew their characters from actual people. The replies showed that this proceeding was very rare. Mrs. Buckrose recalled only one other instance in which she had used an actual person in her fiction. Mrs. Buckrose is Mrs. Falconer Jameson. She lives at Hornsea, East Yorkshire, and says:

"My real hobby is my writing—as it was my secret pleasure from the age of nine until I was over thirty when I first attempted to publish. I look after my chickens, my house and a rather delicate husband; write my books and try to do my duty to my neighbour!"

iv

Back of the new novel by Margaret Culkin Banning, *Spellbinders*, is the question: Has the vote and its consequent widening of the mental horizon introduced a brand new element of discord or a factor for mutual support into modern marriage? The household of the George Flandons was almost wrecked by it. That his wife should accept the opportunity to play her part in State and National affairs seemed to George Flandon a desertion of her real duty.

Mrs. Banning has written a novel which will

surprise those who remember her only by her first novel, *This Marrying*. The surprise will be less for those who read her second novel, *Half Loaves*, for they must have been struck by the real understanding she showed of the married relationship and the marked increase in her skill as a writer. *Spellbinders* is the sort of work one looks for after such a good novel as *Half Loaves*.

Mrs. Banning, who was married in 1914, lives in Duluth. A graduate of Vassar, her first novel was written in one of Margaret Mayo's cottages at Harmon, New York. She is of purely Irish ancestry, related to the Plunkett family which bred both statesmen and revolutionaries for Ireland. On the other side there was a Colonel Culkin, who, Mrs. Banning says, "came over at the time of the Revolution but unfortunately fought on the wrong side, so we forget him and begin our Culkin lineage in this country with the Culkin who came over at the famous time of the 'potato-rot.' " That would be the Irish famine of 1846, no doubt.

Sunny-San, Onoto Watanna's first novel in six years, has been the signal for her re-entrance not only into the world of fiction, but the world of motion pictures and plays. Even before *Sunny-San* was ready as a book, the motion picture producers were on the author's track. A large sum was paid cash down for the picture rights to the novel and then the prospect of a picture was laid aside while the possibilities of a play were estimated. These were seen to be exceptionally good.

Here was a story of young American boys travelling in Japan and coming upon a still younger Japanese girl, threatened with cruelty and unhappiness. The young men endowed Sunny-San, so to speak, planking down enough money to secure her protection and education. Thereupon they continued blithely on their travels and forgot all about her.

Some years later a well-educated, dainty and exceedingly attractive Japanese girl presents herself on the doorstep of a house in New York where one of the young men resides. Situation! What shall the young man do with his charming and unexpected protégée! In view of the prolonged success of Fay Bainter in the play, *East Is West*, it was obviously the thing to make a play out of *Sunny-San*. And this, I believe, is being done as I write. In the meantime Onoto Watanna, who is really Mrs. Winnifred Reeve, and who lives on a ranch near Calgary, Canada, is very busy with her Canadian stories which have excited the enthusiasm of magazine editors. I am confident that she will do a Canadian novel; the more so because she tells me that, despite the success of *Sunny-San* and the enormous success of her earlier Japanese stories, like *A Japanese Nightingale*, her interest is really centred at present in Canada, its people and backgrounds.

V

Pending Dorothy Speare's second novel, let me suggest that those who have not done so read her first, *Dancers in the Dark*. That a young woman just out of Smith College should write this novel, that the novel should then begin immediately selling at a great rate, and that David Belasco should demand a play constructed from the novel is altogether a sequence to cause surprise. I have had letters from older people who said frankly that they could not express themselves about *Dancers in the Dark*, because it dealt with a life with which they were utterly unfamiliar—which, in some cases, they did not know existed. And yet it does exist! The demand for the book, the avidity with which it has been read and the intemperance with which it has been discussed testify that in *Dancers in the Dark* Miss Speare wrote a book with truth in it. I suppose it might be said of her first novel—though I should not agree in saying it—that, like F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*, it had every conceivable fault except the fatal fault; it did not fail to live. The amount of publicity that this book received was astonishing. I have handled clippings from newspapers all over the country—and not mere "items" but "spreads' with pictures—in which the epigrammatic utterances of the characters in *Dancers* were reprinted and their truth or falsity debated hotly. Is the modern girl an "excitement

eater"? Does she "live from man to man and never kill off a man"? There was altogether too much smoke and heat in the controversy for one to doubt the existence, underneath the surface of Miss Speare's fiction, of glowing coals. And Miss Speare? Well, it is a fact that, like her heroine in *Dancers*, she has an exceptional voice; and I understand that she intends to cultivate the voice and to continue as a writer, both. That is a very difficult programme to lay out for one's self, but I really believe her capable of succeeding in both halves of the programme.

Another distinctly popular novel, *The Moon Out of Reach*, by Margaret Pedler, is the fruit of a well-developed career as a novelist. *The Hermit of Far End*, *The House of Dreams Come True*, *The Lamp of Fate*, and *The Splendid Folly* were the forerunners of this immediate and distinct success. Mrs. Pedler is the wife of a sportsman well known in the West of England, the nearest living descendant of Sir Francis Drake. They have a lovely home in the country and Mrs. Pedler, besides the joys of her writing, is a collector of old furniture and china and a devotee of driving, tennis and swimming. It is interesting that as a girl she studied at the Royal Academy of Music with a view to being a professional singer. Marriage diverted her from that, but she still retains her interest in music; and it is characteristic of such novels as *The Splendid Folly* and *The Moon Out of Reach* that a lyric

appearing in the book embodies the theme of the story. These lyrics of Mrs. Pedler's have mostly been set to music.

What shall I say about Corra Harris's *The Eyes of Love* except that it offers such a study of marriage as only Mrs. Harris puts on paper? Shrewd and homely wisdom, sympathetic and ironical humour, the insight and the fundamental experience,—above all, imagination in experience —which made their first deep and wide impression with the publication of *A Circuit Rider's Wife.* I open *The Eyes of Love* at random and come upon such a passage as this, and then I don't wonder that men as well as women read Corra Harris and continue to read her:

"Few women are ever related by marriage to the minds of their husbands. These minds are foreign countries where they discover themselves to be aliens, speaking another smaller language and practically incapable of mastering the manners and customs of that place. This is sometimes the man's fault, because his mind is not a fit place for a nice person like his wife to dwell, but more frequently it is the wife's fault, who is not willing to associate intimately with the hardships that inhabit the mind of a busy man, who has no time to ornament that area with ideas pertaining to the finer things. So it happens that both of them prefer this divorce, the man because the woman gets in the way with her scruples and emotions when he is about to do business without reference

to either; the woman because it is easier to keep on the domestic periphery of her husband, where she thinks she knows him and is married to him because she knows what foods he likes, and the people he prefers to have asked to dine when she entertains, the chair that fits him, the large pillow or the small one he wants for his tired old head at night, the place where the light must be when he reads in the evening rather than talk to her, because there is nothing to talk about, since she is only the wife of his bosom and not of his head."

vi

Phyllis Bottome is just as interesting as her novels. When scarcely more than a child with large, delightful eyes, she began to write, and completed at the age of seventeen a novel which Andrew Lang advised an English publisher to accept. Thereafter she wrote regularly and with increasing distinction. Ill-health drove her to Switzerland where, living for some years, she met all kinds of people from all the countries of Europe and America as well.

It is interesting that her father was an American, although after his marriage to an Englishwoman, he settled in England. Later Mr. Bottome came to America and for six years during Phyllis Bottome's childhood he was rector of Grace Church at Jamaica, New York. Phyllis Bottome is the wife of A. E. Forbes Dennis, who,

recovering from dangerous wounds in the war, has been serving as passport officer at Vienna. They were married in 1917. Those who know Phyllis Bottome personally say that the striking thing about her is the extent of her acquaintance with people of all sorts and conditions of life and her ready and unfailing sympathy with all kinds of people. She herself says that she "has had friends who live humdrum and simple lives and friends whose stories would bring a rush of doubt to the most credulous believer in fiction." "My friendships have included workmen, bargees, actresses, clergymen, thieves, scholars, dancers, soldiers, sailors and even the manager of a bank. It would be true of me to say that as a human being I prefer life to art, even if it would at the same time be damning to admit that I know much more about it. I have no preferences; men, women, children, animals and nature under every aspect seem to me a mere choice of miracles. I have not perhaps many illusions, but I have got hold of one or two certainties. I believe in life and I know that it is very hard."

The hardness of life, its uproar, its agony, its magnificence and its duty, is the theme of Phyllis Bottome's latest and finest novel. When it was published, because it was so different from Phyllis Bottome's earlier work, I tried to draw attention to it by a letter in which I said:

"I don't know whether you read J. C. Snaith's *The Sailor*. People said Snaith got his sugges-

tion from the life of John Masefield. *The Sailor* sold many thousands and people recall the book today, years afterward. But, as an ex-sailor and a few other things, I never found Snaith's 'Enry 'Arper half so convincing as Jim Barton in Phyllis Bottome's new novel, *The Kingfisher.*

"Jim, a boy of the slums, reaching toward 'that broken image of the mind of God—human love,' goes pretty deeply into me. Since reading those last words of the book—'Beauty touched him. It was as if he saw, with a flash of jewelled wings, a Kingfisher fly home'—I keep going back and re-reading bits. . . .

"Won't you tackle *The Kingfisher?* If you'll read to the bottom of page 51, I'll take a chance beyond that. Read that far and then, if you stop there, I've no word to say."

Although this letter called for no special reply, I received dozens of replies promising to read the book and then enthusiastic comments after having read the book. I do not consider *The Kingfisher* the greatest book Phyllis Bottome will write, but it marks an important advance in her work and it is a novel whose positive merits will last; it will be as moving and as significant ten years from now as it is today.

vii

I come to a group of novels of which the chief aim of all except two is entertainment. *The*

Return of Alfred, by the anonymous author of *Patricia Brent, Spinster*, is the diverting narrative of a man who found himself in another man's shoes. What made it particularly difficult was that the other man had been a very bad egg, indeed. And there was, as might have been feared (or anticipated), a girl to complicate matters tremendously.

E. F. Benson's *Peter* is the story of a young man who made a point of being different, of keeping his aloofness and paying just the amount of charm and gaiety required for the dinners and opera seats which London hostesses so gladly proffered. Then he married Silvia, not for her money exactly, but he certainly would not have asked her if she hadn't had money. No wonder E. F. Benson has a liberal and expectant audience! In *Peter* he shows an exquisite understanding of the quality of the love between Peter and his boyish young wife.

A. A. Milne is another name to conjure with among those who love humour and charm, gentleness and a quiet shafting of the human depths. There is his novel, *Mr. Pim*. Old Mr. Pim, in his gentle way, shuffled into the Mardens' charming household. Mr. Pim said a few words and went absentmindedly away,—leaving Mr. Marden with the devastating knowledge that his wife was no wife, that her first husband, instead of lying quietly in his grave in Australia, had just landed in England. In short, the Mardens had

been living in sin for five years! Then Mr. Pim came back for his forgotten hat and the Marden household was again revolutionised.

Beauty for Ashes, by Joan Sutherland, is a story with a more serious theme. It really raises the question whether a man who has wrongly been named as co-respondent is in honour bound to marry the defendant. The affair of Lady Madge with Lord Desmond was an entirely innocent one, despite what London said. Lady Madge's husband, wrought upon by shame and anger, began his action for divorce; and Desmond found himself not merely face to face with dishonour but bound by conventional honour for life to a girl with whom he had simply been friendly.

William Rose Benét had been known chiefly as a poet until the publication of his first novel, *The First Person Singular*. The scene of *The First Person Singular* shifts between the kinetic panorama of modern New York and the somewhat stultifying quietude of a small Pennsylvania town. A mysterious Mrs. Ventress is the centre of its rapidly unfolding series of peculiar situations. Mrs. Ventress is a puzzle to the townspeople. They believe odd things about her. The particular family in Tupton with which she comes in contact is an eccentric one. The father is a recluse—for reasons. His adopted daughter, Bessie Gedney, is an odd character among young girls in fiction. Dr. Gedney's real daughter had

disappeared years before. Why? What has become of her? This complicates the mystery.

The First Person Singular is a light novel, avowedly without the heavy "significance" and desperately drab realism of many modern novels. And yet it flashes with tragedy and implicates grim spiritual struggle without tearing any passion to tatters. The author's touch is light, the variety of his characters furnish him much diversion. The amusing side of each situation does not escape him. His style has a certain effervescent quality, but, for all that, the tragic developments of the story are not shirked.

Another treatment of a problem of marriage, a treatment sympathetic but robust, is found in the new novel of F. E. Mills Young, *The Stronger Influence*. Like Miss Mills Young's earlier novels, *Imprudence* and *The Almonds of Life*, the scene of *The Stronger Influence* is British Africa. The story is of the choice confronting a girl upon whom two men have a vital claim.

To be somebody is more ethical than to serve somebody. The individual has not only a right but an obligation to sacrifice family entanglements in the cause of a necessary personal independence. This is the attitude expressed in Richard Blaker's novel, *The Voice in the Wilderness*. The story centres around the figure of Charles Petrie, popular playwright in London but known in Pelchester merely as a shabby fellow and to his family a singularly sarcastic and an-

noying father. Sarcasm was Petrie's one defence against the limp weight that was Mrs. Petrie. His children would have been astonished to hear him called a charming man of the world, yet he was. It is probable that he never would have come out into the open to combat if he hadn't been moved constantly to interfere and save his daughter Cynthia from offering herself as a willing sacrifice to her mother. Richard Blaker is new to America, a novelist of acutely pointed characterisations and careful atmosphere.

viii

Nêne, the work of an unknown French school teacher, a novel distinguished in France by the award of the Goncourt Prize as the most distinguished French novel of the year 1920, had sold at this writing 400,000 copies in France. Three months after publication, it had sold in this country less than 3,000 copies.

I am glad to say that it was sufficient to draw to the attention of Americans this deplorable discrepancy to arouse interest in the novel. People of so divergent tastes as William Lyon Phelps, Corra Harris, Ralph Connor, Walter Prichard Eaton, Mary Johnston, Dorothy Speare and Richard LeGallienne have been at pains to express the feeling to which *Nêne* has stirred them. I have not space to quote them all, and so select

as typical the comment of Walter Prichard Eaton:

"I read *Nêne* with great interest, especially because of its relation to *Maria Chapdelaine*. It seems to me the two books came out most happily together. *Maria Chapdelaine* gives us the French peasant in the new world, touched with the pioneer spirit, and though close to the soil in constant battle with nature, somehow always master of his fate. *Nêne* gives us this same racial stock, again close to the soil, but an old-world soil its fathers worked, and the peasant here seems ringed around with those old ghosts, their prejudices and their passions. I have seldom read any book which seemed to me so unerringly to capture the enveloping atmosphere of place and tradition, as it conditions the lives of people, and yet to do it so (apparently) artlessly. This struck me so forcibly that it was not till later I began to realise with a sigh—if one himself is a writer, a sigh of envy—that *Nêne* has a directness, a simplicity, a principle of internal growth or dramatic life of its own, which, alas! most of us are incapable of attaining."

The author of *Carnival*, *Sinister Street*, *Plasher's Mead;* of those highly comedic novels, *Poor Relations* and *Rich Relatives;* of other and still more diverse fiction, Compton Mackenzie, has turned to a new task. His fine novel, *The Altar Steps*, concerns itself with a young priest of the Church of England. We live in the Eng-

land of Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria*—the England of 1880 to the close of the Boer War —as we follow Mark Lidderdale from boyhood to his ordination. *The Altar Steps*, it is known, will be followed by a novel probably to be called *The Parson's Progress*. Evidently Mr. Mackenzie is bent upon a fictional study of the whole problem of the Church of England in relation to our times, and particularly the position of the Catholic party in the Church.

"Simon Pure," who writes the monthly letter from London appearing in The Bookman (and whose identity is a well-known secret!) thus describes, in The Bookman for September, 1922, a visit to Mr. Mackenzie:

"I have recently seen the author of *The Altar Steps* upon his native heath. *The Altar Steps* is the latest work of Compton Mackenzie, and it has done something to rehabilitate him with the critics. The press has been less fiercely adverse than usual to the author. He is supposed to have come back to the fold of the 'serious' writers, and so the fatted calf has been slain for him. We shall see. My own impression is that Mackenzie is a humorous writer, and that the wiseacres who want the novel to be 'serious' are barking up the wrong tree. At any rate, there the book is, and it is admitted to be a good book by all who have been condemning Mackenzie as a trifler; and Mackenzie is going on with his sequel to it in the pleasant land of Italy. I did not see him in Italy,

but in Herm, one of the minor Channel Islands. It took me a night to reach the place—a night of fog and fog-signals—a night of mystery, with the moon full and the water shrouded—and morning found the fog abruptly lifted, and the islands before our eyes. They glittered under a brilliant sun. There came hurried disembarking, a transference (for me, and after breakfast) to a small boat called, by the owner's pleasantry, 'Watch Me' (Compton Mackenzie), and then a fine sail (per motor) to Herm. I said to the skipper that I supposed there must be many dangerous submerged rocks. 'My dear fellow!' exclaimed the skipper, driven to familiarity by my naïveté. And with that we reached the island. Upon the end of a pier stood a tall figure, solitary. 'My host!' thought I. Not so. Merely an advance guard: his engineer. We greeted—my reception being that of some foreign potentate—and I was led up a fine winding road that made me think of Samoa and Vailima and all the beauties of the South Seas. Upon the road came another figure—this time a young man who made a friend of me at a glance. He now took me in hand. Together we made the rest of the journey along this beautiful road, and to the cottage of residence. I entered. There was a scramble. At last I met my host, who leapt from bed to welcome me!

"From that moment my holiday was delightful. The island is really magnificent. Short of a stream, it has everything one could wish for in

such a place. It has cliffs, a wood, a common, fields under cultivation, fields used as pasture, caves, shell beaches, several empty cottages. Its bird life is wealthy in cuckoos and other magic-bringers; its flowers have extraordinary interest; dogs and cattle and horses give domestic life, and a boat or two may be used for excursions to Jethou, a smaller island near by. And Mackenzie has this ideal place to live in for as much of the year as he likes. None may gather there without his permission. He is the lord of the manor, and his boundaries are the sea and the sky. We walked about the islands, and saw their beauties, accompanied by a big dog—a Great Dane—which coursed rabbits and lay like a dead fish in the bottom of a small boat. And as each marvel of the little paradise presented itself, I became more and more filled with that wicked thing, envy. But I believe envy does not make much progress when the owner of the desired object so evidently appreciates it with more gusto even than the envious one. Reason is against envy in such a case. To have said, 'He doesn't appreciate it' would have been a lie so manifest that it did not even occur to me. He does. That is the secret of Mackenzie's personal ability to charm. He is filled with vitality, but he is also filled with the power to take extreme delight in the delight of others and to better it. Moreover, he gives one the impression of understanding islands. Herm has been in his possession for

something more than a year, and he has lived there continuously all that time (except for two or three visits to London, of short duration). It has been in all his thoughts. He has seen it as a whole. He knows it from end to end, its rocks, its birds, its trees and flowers and paths. What wonder that his health is magnificent, his spirits high! What wonder the critics have seen fit to praise *The Altar Steps* as they have not praised anything of Mackenzie's for years? If they had seen Herm, they could have done nothing at all but praise without reserve."

Chapter XVII

THE HETEROGENEOUS MAGIC OF MAUGHAM

i

NOW, I don't know where to begin. Probably I shall not know where to leave off, either. That is my usual misfortune, to write a chapter at both ends. It is a fatal thing, like the doubly-consuming candle. Perhaps I might start with the sapience of Hector MacQuarrie, author of *Tahiti Days*. I am tempted to, because so many people think of W. Somerset Maugham as the author of *The Moon and Sixpence*. The day will come, however, when people will think of him as the man who wrote *Of Human Bondage*.

This novel does not need praise. All it needs, like the grand work it is, is attention; and that it increasingly gets.

ii

Theodore Dreiser reviewed *Of Human Bondage* for the New Republic. I reprint part of what he said:

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

"Sometimes in retrospect of a great book the mind falters, confused by the multitude and yet the harmony of the detail, the strangeness of the frettings, the brooding, musing intelligence that has foreseen, loved, created, elaborated, perfected, until, in the middle ground which we call life, somewhere between nothing and nothing, hangs the perfect thing which we love and cannot understand, but which we are compelled to confess a work of art. It is at once something and nothing, a dream of happy memory, a song, a benediction. In viewing it one finds nothing to criticise or to regret. The thing sings, it has colour. It has rapture. You wonder at the loving, patient care which has evolved it.

"Here is a novel or biography or autobiography or social transcript of the utmost importance. To begin with, it is unmoral, as a novel of this kind must necessarily be. The hero is born with a club foot, and in consequence, and because of a temperament delicately attuned to the miseries of life, suffers all the pains, recessions, and involute self tortures which only those who have striven handicapped by what they have considered a blighting defect can understand. He is a youth, therefore, with an intense craving for sympathy and understanding. He must have it. The thought of his lack, and the part which his disability plays in it soon becomes an obsession. He is tortured, miserable.

"Curiously the story rises to no spired climax.

To some it has apparently appealed as a drab, unrelieved narrative. To me at least it is a gorgeous weave, as interesting and valuable at the beginning as at the end. There is material in its three hundred thousand or more words for many novels and indeed several philosophies, and even a religion or stoic hope. There are a series of women, of course—drab, pathetic, enticing as the case may be,—who lead him through the mazes of sentiment, sex, love, pity, passion; a wonderful series of portraits and of incidents. There are a series of men friends of a peculiarly inclusive range of intellectuality and taste, who lead him, or whom he leads, through all the intricacies of art, philosophy, criticism, humour. And lastly comes life itself, the great land and sea of people, England, Germany, France, battering, corroding, illuminating, a Goyaesque world.

"Naturally I asked myself how such a book would be received in America, in England. In the latter country I was sure, with its traditions and the Athenæum and the Saturday Review, it would be adequately appreciated. Imagine my surprise to find that the English reviews were almost uniformly contemptuous and critical on moral and social grounds. The hero was a weakling, not for a moment to be tolerated by sound, right-thinking men. On the other hand, in America the reviewers for the most part have seen its true merits and stated them. Need I say, how-

ever, that the New York World finds it 'the sentimental servitude of a poor fool,' or that the Philadelphia Press sees fit to dub it 'futile Philip,' or that the Outlook feels that 'the author might have made his book true without making it so frequently distasteful'; or that the Dial cries 'a most depressing impression of the futility of life'?

"Despite these dissonant voices it is still a book of the utmost import, and has so been received. Compact of the experiences, the dreams, the hopes, the fears, the disillusionments, the ruptures, and the philosophising of a strangely starved soul, it is a beacon light by which the wanderer may be guided. Nothing is left out; the author writes as though it were a labour of love. It bears the imprint of an eager, almost consuming desire to say truly what is in his heart.

"Personally, I found myself aching with pain when, yearning for sympathy, Philip begs the wretched Mildred, never his mistress but on his level, to no more than tolerate him. He finally humiliates himself to the extent of exclaiming, 'You don't know what it means to be a cripple!' The pathos of it plumbs the depths. The death of Fannie Price, of the sixteen-year-old mother in the slum, of Cronshaw, and the rambling agonies of old Ducroz and of Philip himself, are perfect in their appeal.

"There are many other and all equally brilliant pictures. No one short of a genius could rout the philosophers from their lairs and label them as

individuals 'tempering life with rules agreeable to themselves' or could follow Mildred Rogers, waitress of the London A B C restaurant, through all the shabby windings of her tawdry soul. No other than a genius endowed with an immense capacity for understanding and pity could have sympathised with Fannie Price, with her futile and self-destructive art dreams; or old Cronshaw, the wastrel of poetry and philosophy; or Mons. Ducroz, the worn-out revolutionary; or Thorne Athelny, the caged grandee of Spain; or Leonard Upjohn, airy master of the art of self-advancement; or Dr. South, the vicar of Blackstable, and his wife—these are masterpieces. They are marvellous portraits; they are as smooth as a Vermeer, as definite as a Hals; as brooding and moving as a Rembrandt. The study of Carey himself, while one sees him more as a medium through which the others express themselves, still registers photographically at times. He is by no means a brooding voice but a definite, active, vigorous character.

"If the book can be said to have a fault it will lie for some in its length, 300,000 words, or for others in the peculiar reticence with which the last love affair in the story is handled. Until the coming of Sallie Athelny all has been described with the utmost frankness. No situation, however crude or embarrassing, has been shirked. In the matter of the process by which he arrived at the intimacy which resulted in her becoming pregnant not a word is said. All at once, by a slight

frown which she subsequently explains, the truth is forced upon you that there has been a series of intimacies which have not been accounted for. After Mildred Rogers and his relationship with Norah Nesbit it strikes one as strange. . . .

"One feels as though one were sitting before a splendid Shiraz or Daghestan of priceless texture and intricate weave, admiring, feeling, responding sensually to its colours and tones. Mr. Maugham . . . has suffered for the joy of the many who are to read after him. By no willing of his own he has been compelled to take life by the hand and go down where there has been little save sorrow and degradation. The cup of gall and wormwood has obviously been lifted to his lips and to the last drop he has been compelled to drink it. Because of this, we are enabled to see the rug, woven of the tortures and delights of a life. We may actually walk and talk with one whose hands and feet have been pierced with nails."

iii

I turn, for a different example of the heterogeneous magic of Maugham, including his ability to create and sustain a mood in his readers, to the words of Mr. MacQuarrie, who writes:

"It was Tahiti. With a profound trust in my discretion, or perhaps an utter ignorance of the homely fact that people have their feelings, a London friend sent us a copy of *The Moon and*

Sixpence. This friend, actually a beautiful, well set up woman of the intelligent class in England (which is more often than not the upper fringes or spray of the *bourgeoisie*), wrote: 'You will be interested in this book, since quite the most charming portion of it deals with your remote island of Tahiti. I met the author last night at Lady B——'s. I think the landlady at the end, Mrs. Johnson, is a perfect darling.'

"Knowing Somerset Maugham as a dramatist, the author of that kind of play which never bored one, but rather sent one home suffused with pleasantness, I opened the book with happy anticipation. Therefore—and the title of the book, *The Moon and Sixpence*, gave a jolly calming reaction—I was surprised and frankly annoyed when I found myself compelled to follow the fortunes of a large red-headed man with mighty sex appeal, who barged his way through female tears to a final goal which seemed to be a spiritual achievement, and a nasty death in a native *fare*. I was alarmed; here was a man writing something enormously strong, when I had been accustomed to associate him with charming London nights—the theatre, perfect acting, no middle class problems, a dropping of one's women folks at their doors and a return to White's and whiskey and a soda. And furthermore, in this book of his, he had picked up Lavina, the famous landlady of the Tiare Hotel, the uncrowned queen of Tahiti, and with a few strokes of his pen, had dissected

her, and exposed her to the world as she was. Here I must quote:

" 'Tall and extremely stout, she would have been an imposing presence if the great good nature of her face had not made it impossible for her to express anything but kindliness. Her arms were like legs of mutton, her breasts like giant cabbages; her face, broad and fleshy, gave you an impression of almost indecent nakedness and vast chin succeeded vast chin.'

"This may seem a small matter in a great world. Tahiti is a small world, and this became a great matter. I read the book twice, decided that Somerset Maugham could no longer be regarded as a pleasant liqueur, but rather as the joint of a meal requiring steady digestion, and suppressed *The Moon and Sixpence* on Tahiti. The temptation to lend it to a kindred spirit was almost unbearable, but the thought of Lavina hearing of the above description of her person frightened me and I resisted. For kindred souls, on Tahiti as elsewhere, have their own kindred souls, and slowly but surely the fact that a writer had described her arms as legs of mutton (perfect!) and her breasts as huge cabbages (even better!) would have oozed its way to Lavina, sending her to bed for six days, with gloom spread over Tahiti and no cocktails.

"All of which is a trifle by the way. Yet in writing of Somerset Maugham one must gaze along all lines of vision. And it seemed to me

that Tahiti in general, and Papeete in particular should supply a clear one; for here, certainly, in the days when Maugham visited the island a man could be mentally dead, spiritually naked and physically unashamed. I therefore sought Lavina one afternoon as she sat clothed as with a garment by the small side verandah of the Tiare Hotel. (Lavina was huge; the verandah was a small verandah as verandahs go; there was just room for me and a bottle of rum.)

" 'Lavina,' I remarked; 'many persons who write come to Tahiti.'

" 'It is true,' she admitted, 'but not as the heavy rain, rather as the few drops at the end.'

" 'Do you like them?' I enquired.

"One makes that kind of remark on Tahiti. The climate demands such, since the answer can be almost anything, a meandering spreading-of-weight kind of answer.

" 'These are good men,' said Lavina steadily, wandering off into the old and possibly untrue story of a lady called Beatrice Grimshaw and her dilemma on a schooner in mid-Pacific, when the captain, a gentle ancient, thinking that the dark women were having it all their own way, offered to embrace Miss Grimshaw, finding in return a gun pointing at his middle, filling him with quaint surprise that anyone could possibly offer violence in defence of a soul in so delightful a climate.

"After which and a rum cocktail, I said:

'Lavina, did you see much of M'sieur Somerset Maugham when he was here?'

" 'It is the man who writes?' she inquired lazily.

" 'It is,' I returned.

" 'It is the *beau garçon-ta-ta, neneenha roa?*' she suggested.

" 'Probably not,' I said; 'I suspect you are thinking, as usual, of Rupert Brooke. M'sieur Maugham may be regarded as *beau*, but he is not an elderly waiter of forty-seven, therefore we may not call him a *garcon*.'

" 'It is,' Lavina admitted; 'that I am thinking of M'sieur Rupert, he is the *beau garçon*.'

" 'But,' I said, 'I want to know what you thought of M'sieur Somerset Maugham?'

"Once started on Rupert Brooke, and Lavina would go on for the afternoon!

" 'I respect M'sieur Morn,' said Lavina.

" 'Oh!' thought I; 'if she respects him, then I'm not going to get much.'

" 'His French is not mixed,' she continued, referring to Maugham's Parisian accent; 'I speak much with him, and he listen, with but a small question here, and one there. It is the pure French from Paris, as M'sieur *le Governeur* speak, who is the pig. But when he speak much, then it is like the coral which breaks.'

"Lavina now wandered off permanently; it was impossible to bring her back. Her image of the brittle coral branches was a mild personality di-

rected at Maugham's stutter, which seldom escapes the most sophisticated observer. For those who interview him always find well cut suitings, clean collars and the stutter, and very little else that they can lay hold of with any degree of honesty. Which only goes to prove my own opinion that Maugham, as an observer, refuses to have his own vision clogged by prying eyes at himself.

"I expect that if my French had been better, I might have got some information about Maugham in Tahiti from the bland and badly built French officials who lurk in the official club near the Pomare Palace. I was reduced, in my rather casual investigation, to questioning natives and schooner captains. Once I felt confident of gaining a picture. I asked Titi of Taunoa. (Titi is the lady who figures a trifle disgracefully in Gauguin's *Noanoa*, the woman he found boring after a few weeks, her French blood being insufficiently exotic to his spirit.)

"Said Titi: 'M'sieur Morn? Yes, him I know; he speak good French, and take the door down from the *fare* on which is the picture done by Gauguin of the lady whose legs are like thin pillows and her arms like fat ropes, very what you call strained, and funny.'

"After which her remarks centred around a lover of her sister, who had just died at the age of seventy, and Titi considered that the denouement made by Manu, the sister, was uncalled for

at the death bed, since the true and faithful wife stood there surrounded by nine children, all safely born the right side of the sheet. She did mention that the removal of the door from the *fare* caused the wind to enter. And although I often made inquiries, I never gained much information. Tahiti, as a whole, seemed unaware of Maugham's visit.

"They may have adored him; but I suspect he was a quiet joy, the kind native Tahiti soon forgets, certainly not the kind of joy she embodies in her national songs and *himines*. Such are the merry drunkards, inefficient though earnest white hulahula dancers and the plain (more than everyday) sinners who cut up rough with wild jagged edges and cruel tearings.

"His occasional appearance at the French club would raise his status, removing any light touches with his junketings, perhaps turning them into dignified ceremonies. Which, for the Tahitian, approaches the end. The Tahitian never quite understands the white man who consorts with the French officials, although many do. 'For are not these men of Farane,' says the native, 'like the hen that talks without feathers?'—whatever that may mean, but it suggests at once the talkative Frenchman denuding himself on hot evenings, and wearing but the native *pareu* to hide portions of his bad figure.

"But although, in some ways, Maugham hid himself from the natives and pleasant half-castes,

he saw them all right, and clearly, since the closing pages of the *The Moon and Sixpence* display a magical picture of that portion of Tahiti he found time to explore."

iv

Mr. Maugham now offers us *On a Chinese Screen*, sketches of Chinese life, and *East of Suez*, his new play.

There are fifty-eight sketches in *On a Chinese Screen*, portraits including European residents in China as well as native types. Here is a sample of the book, the little descriptive study with which it closes, entitled "A Libation to the Gods":

"She was an old woman, and her face was wizened and deeply lined. In her grey hair three long silver knives formed a fantastic headgear. Her dress of faded blue consisted of a long jacket, worn and patched, and a pair of trousers that reached a little below her calves. Her feet were bare, but on one ankle she wore a silver bangle. It was plain that she was very poor. She was not stout but squarely built and in her prime she must have done without effort the heavy work in which her life had been spent. She walked leisurely, with the sedate tread of an elderly woman, and she carried on her arm a basket. She came down to the harbour; it was crowded with painted junks; her eyes rested for a moment curiously on a man who stood on a narrow bamboo

raft, fishing with cormorants; and then she set about her business. She put down her basket on the stones of the quay, at the water's edge, and took from it a red candle. This she lit and fixed in a chink of the stones. Then she took several joss-sticks, held each of them for a moment in the flame of the candle and set them up around it. She took three tiny bowls and filled them with a liquid that she had brought with her in a bottle and placed them neatly in a row. Then from her basket she took rolls of paper cash and paper 'shoes' and unravelled them, so that they should burn easily. She made a little bonfire, and when it was well alight she took the three bowls and poured out some of their contents before the smouldering joss-sticks. She bowed herself three times and muttered certain words. She stirred the burning paper so that the flames burned brightly. Then she emptied the bowls on the stones and again bowed three times. No one took the smallest notice of her. She took a few more paper cash from her basket and flung them in the fire. Then, without further ado, she took up her basket, and with the same leisurely, rather heavy tread, walked away. The gods were duly propitiated, and like an old peasant woman in France, who has satisfactorily done her day's housekeeping, she went about her business."

V

W. Somerset Maugham was born in 1874, the son of Robert Ormond Maugham. He married Syrie, daughter of the late Dr. Barnardo. Mr. Maugham has a daughter. His education was got at King's School, Canterbury, at Heidelberg University and at St. Thomas's Hospital, London.

Mr. Maugham's father was a comparatively prominent solicitor, responsible for the foundation of the Incorporated Society of Solicitors in England. Somerset Maugham, after studying medicine at Heidelberg, went to St. Thomas's, in the section of London known as Lambeth. He obtained his medical degree there. St. Thomas's just across the river from Westminster proved his medical ruin, and his literary birth. The hospital is situated on the border of the slum areas of South London where much that is hopeless, terrible, and wildly cheerful can be found. Persons are not wanting who hold that the slums of Battersea and Lambeth contain more misery and poverty than Limehouse, Whitechapel and the dark forest surrounding the Commercial Road combined. To St. Thomas's daily comes a procession of battered derelicts, seeking attention from the young men in white tunics who hope to be doctors on their own account some day. To St. Thomas's came Eliza of Lambeth, came Liza's mother, came Jim and Tom. Here is the genesis of Maugham's first serious work, *Liza of Lambeth*.

HETEROGENEOUS MAGIC OF MAUGHAM

It will be simpler and less confusing to deal with Somerset Maugham in the first instance as a maker of books rather than as a playwright. One cannot help believing that, while not one of his plays can be regarded as a pot boiler, they yet but seldom display that fervent purpose found in his books. Yet in his plays, one finds a greater attention to conventional technique and "form" than one finds in books like *Of Human Bondage* and *The Moon and Sixpence.*

The first book launched by Somerset Maugham, *Liza of Lambeth*, could hardly have been, considering its slight dimensions, a clearer indication of the line he was to follow. It came out at a time when Gissing was still in favour, and the odour of mean streets was accepted as synonymous with literary honesty and courage. There is certainly no lack of either about this idyll of Elizabeth Kemp of the lissome limbs and auburn hair. The story pursues its way, and one sees the soul of a woman shining clearly through the racy dialect and frolics of the Chingford beano, the rueful futility of faithful Thomas and the engaging callousness of Liza's mother.

Somerset Maugham's next study in female portraiture showed how far he could travel towards perfection. *Mrs. Craddock*, which is often called his best book, is a sex satire punctuated by four curtains, two of comedy and two of tragedy. This mixture of opposites should have been enough to damn it in the eyes of a public intent upon classi-

fying everything by means of labels and of making everything so classified stick to its label like grim death. Yet the unclassified may flourish, and does, when its merit is beyond dispute. *Mrs. Craddock* appeared fully a decade before its time, when Victorian influences were still alive, and the modern idea for well to do women to have something to justify their existence was still in the nature of a novelty. Even in the fuller light of experience, Maugham could hardly have bettered his study of an impulsive and exigent woman, rising at the outset to the height of a bold and womanly choice in defiance of social prejudice and family tradition, and then relapsing under the disillusions of marriage into the weakest failings of her class, rising again, from a self-torturing neurotic into a kind of Niobe at the death of her baby.

The ironic key of the book is at its best, in the passage half way through—

"Mr. Craddock's principles, of course, were quite right; he had given her plenty of run and ignored her cackle, and now she had come home to roost. There is nothing like a knowledge of farming, and an acquaintance with the habits of domestic animals, to teach a man how to manage his wife."

vi

As a playwright Mr. Maugham is quite as well known as he is for his novels. The author of

Lady Frederick, *Mrs. Dot*, and *Caroline*—the creator of Lord Porteous and Lady Kitty in *The Circle*—writes his plays because it amuses him to do so and because they supply him with an excellent income. Here is a good story:

It seems that Maugham had peddled his first play, *Lady Frederick*, to the offices of seventeen well-known London managers, until it came to rest in the Archives of the Court Theatre. The Court Theatre, standing in Sloane Square near the Tube station, is definitely outside the London theatre area, but as the scene of productions by the Stage Society, it is kept in the running. However, it might conceivably be the last port of call for a worn manuscript.

It so happened that Athole Stewart, the manager of the Court Theatre, found himself needing a play very badly during one season. The theatre had to be kept open and there was nothing to keep it open with. From a dingy pile of play manuscripts he chose *Lady Frederick*. He had no hopes of its success—or so it is said—but the success materialised. At the anniversary of *Lady Frederick* in London, Maugham thought of asking to dinner the seventeen managers who rejected the play, but realising that no man enjoyed being reminded of a lost opportunity he decided to forgo the pleasure.

The circumstances in which *Caroline* was written give an interesting reflex on Maugham as an artist. This delicious comedy was put on paper

while Maugham was acting as British agent in Switzerland during the war. Some of its more amusing lines were written in some haste while a spy (of uncertain intentions toward Maugham) stood outside in the snow.

vii

Someone, probably the gifted Hector MacQuarrie, whom I fear I have guiltily been quoting in almost every sentence of this chapter, has said that Maugham writes "transcripts, not of life as a tolerable whole, but of phases which suit his arbitrary treatment." It is an enlightening comment.

But Maugham himself is the keenest appraiser of his own intentions in his work, as when he spoke of the stories in his book, *The Trembling of a Leaf*, as not short stories, but "a study of the effect of the Islands of the Pacific on the white man."

The man never stays still. When you think the time is ripe for him triumphally to tour America—when *The Moon and Sixpence* has attracted the widest attention—he insists on going immediately to China. This may be because, though well set up, black-eyed, broad-framed and excessively handsome in evening clothes, he is rather diffident.

Books

by W. Somerset Maugham

Novels:

LIZA OF LAMBETH
THE MAKING OF A SAINT
ORIENTATIONS
THE HERO
MRS. CRADDOCK
THE MERRY-GO-ROUND
THE LAND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN
THE BISHOP'S APRON
THE EXPLORER
THE MAGICIAN
OF HUMAN BONDAGE
THE MOON AND SIXPENCE
THE TREMBLING OF A LEAF
ON A CHINESE SCREEN

Plays:

SCHIFFBRÜCHIG
A MAN OF HONOUR
LADY FREDERICK
JACK STRAW
MRS. DOT
THE EXPLORER
PENELOPE
SMITH
THE TENTH MAN
GRACE
LOAVES AND FISHES

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

THE LAND OF PROMISE
CAROLINE
LOVE IN A COTTAGE
CÆSAR'S WIFE
HOME AND BEAUTY
THE UNKNOWN
THE CIRCLE
EAST OF SUEZ

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Chapter XVIII

BOOKS WE LIVE BY

i

THE Parallel New Testament is by Dr. James Moffatt, whose *New Translation of the New Testament* has excited such wide admiration and praise. *The Parallel New Testament* presents the Authorised Version and Professor Moffatt's translation in parallel columns, together with a brief introduction to the New Testament.

I suppose there is no sense in my expending adjectives in praise of Dr. Moffatt's translation of the New Testament. I could do so very easily. But what I think would be more effective would be to ask you to take a copy of the Authorised Version and read in it some such passage as Luke, 24th chapter, 13th verse, to the close of the chapter and then—and not before!—read the same account from Dr. Moffatt's *New Translation*, as follows:

"That very day two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were conversing about all

these events, and during their conversation and discussion Jesus himself approached and walked beside them, though they were prevented from recognising him. He said to them, 'What is all this you are debating on your walk?' They stopped, looking downcast, and one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you a lone stranger in Jerusalem, not to know what has been happening there?' 'What is that?' he said to them. They replied, 'All about Jesus of Nazaret! To God and all the people he was a prophet strong in action and utterance, but the high priests and our rulers delivered him up to be sentenced to death and crucified him. Our own hope was that he would be the redeemer of Israel; but he is dead and that is three days ago! Though some women of our number gave us a surprise; they were at the tomb early in the morning and could not find his body, but they came to tell us they had actually seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our company did go to the tomb and found things exactly as the women had said, but they did not see him.' He said to them, 'Oh, foolish men, with hearts so slow to believe, after all the prophets have declared! Had not the Christ to suffer thus and so enter his glory?' Then he began with Moses and all the prophets and interpreted to them the passages referring to himself throughout the scriptures. Now they approached the village to which they were going. He pretended to be going further on, but they

pressed him, saying 'Stay with us, for it is getting towards evening and the day has now declined.' So he went in to stay with them. And as he lay at the table with them he took the loaf, blessed it, broke it and handed it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, but he vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, 'Did not our hearts glow within us when he was talking to us on the road, opening up the scriptures for us?' So they got up and returned that very hour to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven and their friends all gathered, who told them that the Lord had really risen and that he had appeared to Simon. Then they related their own experience on the road and how they had recognised him when he broke the loaf. Just as they were speaking He stood among them [and said to them, 'Peace to you!']. They were scared and terrified, imagining it was a ghost they saw; but he said to them, 'Why are you upset? Why do doubts invade your mind? Look at my hands and feet. It is I! Feel me and see; a ghost has not flesh and bones as you see I have.' [With these words he showed them his hands and feet.] Even yet they could not believe it for sheer joy; they were lost in wonder. So he said to them, 'Have you any food here?' And when they handed him a piece of broiled fish, he took and ate it in their presence. Then he said to them, 'When I was still with you, this is what I told you, that whatever is written about me in the law

of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. 'Thus,' he said, 'it is written that the Christ has to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance and the remission of sins must be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. To this you must bear testimony. And I will send down on you what my Father has promised; wait in the city till you are endued with power from on high.' He led them out as far as Bethany; then, lifting his hands, he blessed them. And as he blessed them, he parted from them [and was carried up to heaven]. They [worshipped him and] returned with great joy to Jerusalem, where they spent all their time within the temple, blessing God."

I am particularly glad to say that Dr. Moffatt is at work now on a *New Translation of the Old Testament*. No man living is fitter for this tremendously important and tremendously difficult task than James Moffatt. Born in Glasgow in 1870, Dr. Moffatt has been Professor of Church History there since 1915. Of his many published studies in Bible literature, I now speak only of *The Approach to the New Testament*, which he modestly describes as "a brief statement of the general situation created by historical criticism," aiming to "bring out the positive value of the New Testament literature for the world of today as a source of guidance in social reconstruc-

tion, so that readers might be enabled to recover or retain a sense of its lasting significance for personal faith and social ideals."

ii

With Alfred Dwight Sheffield's *Joining in Public Discussion* was begun publication of a unique collection of books suitable alike for general reading and for use in trade union colleges. This is the Workers' Bookshelf Series. These books, in many instances, are being written by the chief authorities on their subjects—men who have dealt exhaustively with their specialties in two and three-volume treatises, and who now bring their great knowledge to a sharp focus and a simple, condensed statement in small but wholly authoritative new books.

The work of preparing these little masterpieces has been undertaken by an editorial board chosen with the aid of the Workers' Education Bureau of America. The board consists of Charles A. Beard, Miss Fannia Cohn, H. W. L. Dana, John P. Frey, Arthur Gleason, Everitt Dean Martin, Spencer Miller, Jr., George W. Perkins and Robert Wolf.

Trade union colleges now exist all over the United States, training armies of workers. The lack of suitable texts for use in these colleges has been a serious obstacle to the training they desire to give.

This obstacle the Workers' Bookshelf overcomes. The books that compose it will each be distinguished for (a) scholarship, (b) a scientific attitude toward facts, and (c) simplicity of style.

Each volume is beginning as a class outline and will receive the benefit of every suggestion and criticism through its gradual growth into the written book.

Each book will be brief. Its references will help the reader to more detailed sources of information.

By binding the books in paper as well as in cloth, the volumes will be brought within the reach of all.

The Workers' Bookshelf will contain no volumes on vocational guidance, nor any books which give "short cuts" to moneymaking success.

The series will not be limited to any set number of volumes nor to any programme of subjects. Art, literature and the natural sciences, as well as the social sciences, will be dealt with. New titles will be added as the demand for treatment of a topic becomes apparent.

The first use of these books will be as texts to educate workers; the intermediate use of the books will be as the nucleus of workingmen's libraries, collective and personal, and the last use of the Workers' Bookshelf will be to instruct and delight all readers of serious books everywhere.

In our modern industrial society, knowledge—things to know—increases much more rapidly than

our understanding. The worker finds it increasingly difficult to comprehend the world he has done most to create. The education of the worker consists in showing him in a simple fashion the interrelations of that world and all its aspects as they are turned toward him. On the education of the worker depends the future of industrialism, and, indeed, of all human society.

The author of *Joining in Public Discussion* is professor of rhetoric in Wellesley College and instructor in the Boston Trade Union College. His book "is a study of effective speechmaking, for members of labour unions, conferences, forums and other discussion groups." The first section is upon "Qualifying Oneself to Contribute" to any discussion and the second section is upon "Making the Discussion Group Co-operate." A brief introduction explains "What Discussion Aims to Do."

The following titles of the Workers' Bookshelf are in preparation:

Trade Union Policy, by Dr. Leo Wolman, lecturer at the New School for Social Research and instructor in the Workers' University of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

Women and the Labor Movement, by Alice Henry, editor of Life and Labour, director of the Training School for Women Workers in Industry.

Labor and Health, by Dr. Emery Hayhurst of

Ohio State University, author of "Industrial Health Hazards and Occupational Diseases."

Social Forces in Literature, by Dr. H. W. L. Dana, formerly teacher of comparative literature at Columbia, now instructor at Boston Trade Union College.

The Creative Spirit in Industry, by Robert B. Wolf, vice-president of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, member of the Federated American Engineering Society.

Co-operative Movement, by Dr. James B. Warbasse, president of the Co-operative League of America and instructor at the Workers' University.

iii

Side by side in Esme Wingfield-Stratford's *Facing Reality* are chapters with these titles: "Thinking in a Passion" and "Mental Inertia." Those chapter titles seem to me to signify the chief dangers confronting the world today—perhaps confronting the world in any day—and the main reasons why we do not face reality as we should. I regard *Facing Reality* as an important book and I am not alone in so regarding it. What do we mean by reality? The answer is explicit in a sentence in Mr. Wingfield-Stratford's introduction, where he says:

"But if we are to get right with reality or, in the time-honoured evangelical phrase, with God, it must be by a ruthless determination to get the

truth in religion, even if we have to break down Church walls to attain it."

Then the author proceeds to assess the social and ethical conditions which threaten the world with spiritual bankruptcy. As he says:

"Whether Germany can be fleeced of a yearly contribution, of doubtful advantage to the receiver, for forty years or sixty, what particular economic laws decree that Poles should be governed by Germans or vice-versa, whose honour or profit demands the possession of the town of Fiume or the district of Tetschen or the Island of Yap, why all the horses and men of the Entente are necessary to compel the Port of Dantzig to become a free city, what particular delicacy of national honour requires that the impartial distribution of colonies should be interpreted as meaning the appropriation of the whole of them by the victors—all these things are held by universal consent to be more urgent and interesting than the desperate necessity that confronts us all."

And yet, for some, reality is not immanent in the affairs of this world but only in those of the next. Among the men who, with Sir Oliver Lodge, have gone most deeply and earnestly into the whole subject we call "spiritualism," Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is now the most widely known as he has always been the most persuasive. The overflowing crowds which came out to hear him lecture on psychic evidences during his recent

tour of America testify to the unquenchable hope of mankind in a life beyond ours. Sir Arthur has written three books on this subject closest to his heart. *The New Revelation* and *The Vital Message* are both short books presenting the general case for spiritualists; *The Wanderings of a Spiritualist*, the result of a lecture tour in India and Australia, commingles incidents of travel with discussions of psychic phenomena. I believe Sir Arthur has in preparation a more extensive work, probably to be published under the title *Spiritualism and Rationalism*.

In recent years there has been something like a consensus honouring Havelock Ellis as the ablest living authority on the subject of sex; or perhaps I should say that Mr. Ellis and his wife are the most competent writers on this difficult and delicate subject, so beset by fraudulent theories and so much written upon by charlatans. Let me recommend to you Havelock Ellis's slender book, *Little Essays of Love and Virtue*, for a sane, attractive and, at the same time, authoritative handling of sex problems.

iv

Little Essays of Love and Virtue, however, is, after all, only upon a special subject, even though of extreme importance. There are others among the books we live by which I must speak of here. It is tiresome to point out that we are all self-

made men or women, consciously or unconsciously, in the sense that if we gain control of our habits, to a very large extent we acquire control of our lives. If, in *Some Things That Matter* Lord Riddell did no more than point out this old truth, his book would not be worth mentioning. What makes it so well worth mentioning, so much more deserving of discussion than any I can enter upon here, is the fact that Lord Riddell tells how to observe, how to read, and how to think—or perhaps I should say how to develop the habit of thought. I think, so able are his instructions, so pointed and so susceptible of carrying out by any reader, that his book would carry due weight even if it were anonymous. But for those who want assurance that the author of *Some Things That Matter* is himself somebody who matters, let me point out that he is one of the largest newspaper proprietors in the world, a man whose grasp on affairs has twice placed him at the head of news service for two continents—once at the Peace Conference in Paris and afterward at the Disarmament Conference in Washington.

Some Things That Matter is the best book of its kind since Arnold Bennett's *How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day*, a little book of trenchant advice to which it is a pleasure again to call attention. Of all Mr. Bennett's pocket philosophies—*Self and Self-Management*, *Friendship and Happiness*, *The Human Machine*, *Mental Efficiency* and *Married Life—How to Live on*

Twenty-four Hours a Day is easily of the greatest service to the greatest number of people.

v

I read Dr. George L. Perin's *Self-Healing Simplified* in manuscript and enthusiastically recommended its acceptance for publication. Dr. Perin was the founder of the Franklin Square House for Girls in Boston, a home-hotel from which 70,000 girls, most of whom Dr. Perin knew personally, have gone forth all over these United States. His death at the end of 1921 was felt by thousands of people as a personal loss. He left, in the manuscript of this book, the best and simplest volume I know of on what is generally called autosuggestion. And I have examined a great many books of the sort.

Discarding all extreme claims, Dr. Perin says in the first place that the mind can heal; that it may not be able to heal alone; that obviously no form of healing can be successful without a favourable mental state; that the favourable mental state can usually be acquired by the sincere and conscious effort of the sufferer. This effort should take the form of certain affirmations.

It is at this point that the ordinary book on autosuggestion breaks down—so far as any practical usefulness is concerned. Either it degenerates into a purely technical treatise or it becomes lost in a mysticism which is to the average

reader incomprehensible. What has long been needed has been a book like *Self-Healing Simplified*, readable by the ordinary person who has his own troubles to contend with and who knows not how to contend with them; who is willing to believe that he can do his part by cheerful resolutions and faith toward getting well, but who has no idea what to do.

Dr. Perin tells him *what* to do, *what* to say, *what* to think and how to order his daily life. Actually Dr. Perin does much more than this; his own confidence and personal success inspire confidence and give the impulsion toward one's own personal success. However, excellent as the book might be, it would be worthless if it were not clearly and simply expressed. It is. I remember no book of the kind so direct and so lucid.

vi

It is a pleasure to feel that his new book, *Poets and Puritans*, introduces T. R. Glover to a wider audience. The author of *The Pilgrim*, *Essays on Religion*, *The Nature and Purpose of a Christian Society*, *Jesus in the Experience of Man* and *The Jesus of History* is a scholar and somewhat of a recluse whom one finds after much groping about dim halls at Cambridge. A highly individual personality! It is this personality, though, that makes the fascination of *Poets and Pilgrims*—a volume of studies in which the subjects are

Spenser, Milton, Evelyn, Bunyan, Boswell, Crabbe, Wordsworth and Carlyle. Mr. Glover notes at the foot of the table of contents: "An acute young critic, who saw some of the proofs, has asked me, with a hint of irony, whether Evelyn and Boswell were Puritans or Poets. Any reader who has a conscience about the matter must omit these essays." There you have the flavour of the man! It is expressed further in the short preface of *Poets and Puritans*:—

"Wandering among books and enjoying them, I find in a certain sense that, the more I enjoy them, the harder becomes the task of criticism, the less sure one's faith in critical canons, and the fewer the canons themselves. Of one thing, though, I grow more and more sure—that the real business of the critic is to find out what is right with a great work of art—book, song, statue, or picture—not what is wrong. Plenty of things may be wrong, but it is what is right that really counts. If the critic's work is to be worth while, it is the great element in the thing that he has to seek and to find—to learn what it is that makes it live and gives it its appeal, so that, as Montaigne said about Plutarch, men 'cannot do without' it; why it is that in a world, where everything that can be 'scrapped' is 'scrapped,' is thrown aside and forgotten, this thing, this book or picture, refuses to be ignored, but captures and charms men generations after its maker has passed away.

"With such a quest a man must not be in a hurry, and he does best to linger in company with the great men whose work he wishes to understand, and to postpone criticism to intimacy. This book comes in the end to be a record of personal acquaintances and of enjoyment. But one is never done with knowing the greatest men or the greatest works of art—they carry you on and on, and at the last you feel you are only beginning. That is my experience. I would not say that I know these men, of whom I have written, thoroughly—a man of sense would hardly say that, but I can say that I have enjoyed my work, and that, whatever other people may find it, to me it has been a delight and an illumination."

Another welcome book is E. V. Lucas's *Giving and Receiving*, a new volume of essays. Since the appearance of *Roving East and Roving West*, Mr. Lucas has been looking back at America from London with its fogs and (yes!) its sunshine. The audience for his new book will include not only those readers he has had for such volumes in the past but all those personal friends that he made in a visit that took him from California to the Battery.

Chapter XIX

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS AND THE WHOLE TRUTH

i

ONCE a man came to Robert W. Chambers and said words to this effect:

"You had a great gift as a literary artist and you spoiled it. For some reason or other, I don't know what, but I suppose there was more money in the other thing, you wrote down to a big audience. Don't you think, yourself, that your earlier work—those stories of Paris and those novels of the American revolution—had something that you have sacrificed in your novels of our modern day?"

Mr. Chambers listened politely and attentively. When the man had finished, Chambers said to him words to this effect:

"You are mistaken. I have heard such talk. I am not to blame if some people entertain a false impression. I have sacrificed nothing, neither for money nor popularity nor anything else.

"Sir, I am a story-teller. I have no other gift. Those who imagine that they have seen in my

earlier work some quality of literary distinction or some unrealised possibility as an artist missing from my later work, are wrong.

"They have read into those stories their own satisfaction in them and their first delight. I was new, then. In their pleasure, such as it was, they imagined the arrival of someone whom they styled a great literary artist. They imagined it all; it was not I.

"A story-teller I began, and a story-teller I remain. I do pride myself on being a good story-teller; if the verdict were overwhelmingly against me as a good story-teller that would cast me down. I have no reason to believe that the verdict is against me.

"And that is the ground I myself have stood upon. I am not responsible for the delusion of those who put me on some other, unearthly pinnacle, only to realise, as the years went by, that I was not there at all. But they can find me now where they first found me—where I rather suspect they found me first with unalloyed delight."

This does not pretend to be an actual transcription of the conversation between Mr. Chambers and his visitor. I asked Mr. Chambers recently if he recalled this interview. He said at this date he did not distinctly recollect it and he added:

"Probably I said what is true, that I write the sort of stories which at the moment it amuses me to write; I trust to luck that it may also amuse the public.

"If a writer makes a hit with a story the public wants him to continue that sort of story. It does not like to follow the moods of a writer from gay to frivolous, from serious to grave, but I have always liked to change, to experiment—just as I used to like to change my medium in painting, aquarelle, oil, charcoal, wash, etc.

"Unless I had a good time writing I'd do something else. I suit myself first of all in choice of subject and treatment, and leave the rest to the gods."

As a human creature Chambers is strikingly versatile. It must always be remembered that he started life as a painter. There is a story that Charles Dana Gibson and Robert W. Chambers sent their first offerings to Life at the same time. Mr. Chambers sent a picture and Mr. Gibson sent a bit of writing. Mr. Gibson's offering was accepted and Robert W. Chambers received a rejection slip.

Not only was he a painter but Chambers has preserved his interest in art, and is a welcome visitor in the offices of curators and directors of museums because he is one of the few who can talk intelligently about paintings.

He knows enough about Chinese and Japanese antiques to enable him to detect forgeries. He knows more about armour than anyone, perhaps, except the man who made the marvellous collection of mediæval armour for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

One of his varieties of knowledge, observable by any reader of his novels, is lepidoptery—the science of butterflies. He collects butterflies with exceeding ardour. But then, he is a good deal of an outdoor man. He knows horses and books; he has been known to hunt; he has been seen with a fishing rod in his hand.

His knowledge of out-of-the-way places in different parts of the world—Paris, Petrograd—is not usual.

Will you believe me if I add that he is something of an expert on rare rugs?

Of course, I am, to some extent, taking Rupert Hughes's word for these accomplishments; and yet they are visible in the written work of Robert W. Chambers where, as a rule, they appear without extrusion.

ii

And here is the newest Robert W. Chambers novel, *Eris*. Mr. Chambers's *The Flaming Jewel*, a melodrama of the maddest character, was published last spring. *Eris* is really a story of the movie world, and reaches its most definite conclusion, possibly, in a passage where the hero says to Eris Odell:

"Whether they are financing a picture, directing it, releasing it, exhibiting it, or acting in it, these vermin are likely to do it to death. Your profession is crawling with them. It needs delousing."

But I am not really anxious, in this chapter, to discuss the justice or injustice of the view of motion pictures thus forcibly presented. I have read *Eris* with an interest sharpened by the fact that its hero is a writer. I seem to see in what is said about and by Barry Annan expressions of Mr. Chambers's own attitude of more than casual importance.

Barry Annan is obsessed with the stupidity of the American mass and more particularly with the grossness (as he sees it) of New York City.

"Annan went on with his breakfast leisurely. As he ate he read over his pencilled manuscript and corrected it between bites of muffin and bacon.

"It was laid out on the lines of those modern short stories which had proven so popular and which had lifted Barry Annan out of the uniform ranks of the unidentified and given him an individual and approving audience for whatever he chose to offer them.

"Already there had been lively competition among periodical publishers for the work of this newcomer.

"His first volume of short stories was now in preparation. Repetition had stencilled his name and his photograph upon the public cerebrum. Success had not yet enraged the less successful in the literary puddle. The frogs chanted politely in praise of their own comrade.

"The maiden, too, who sips the literary soup

that seeps through the pages of periodical publications, was already requesting his autograph. Clipping agencies began to pursue him; film companies wasted his time with glittering offers that never materialised. Annan was on the way to premature fame and fortune. And to the aftermath that follows for all who win too easily and too soon.

"There is a King Stork for all puddles. His law is the law of compensations. Dame Nature executes it—alike on species that swarm and on individuals that ripen too quickly.

"Annan wrote very fast. There was about thirty-five hundred words in the story of Eris. He finished it by halfpast ten.

"Re-reading it, he realised it had all the concentrated brilliancy of an epigram. Whether or not it would hold water did not bother him. The story of Eris was Barry Annan at his easiest and most persuasive. There was the characteristic and ungodly skill in it, the subtle partnership with a mindless public that seduces to mental speculation; the reassuring caress as reward for intellectual penetration; that inborn cleverness that makes the reader see, applaud, or pity him or herself in the sympathetic rôle of a plaything of Chance and Fate.

"And always Barry Annan left the victim of his tact and technique agreeably trapped, suffering gratefully, excited by self-approval to the verge of sentimental tears.

" 'That'll make 'em ruffle their plumage and gulp down a sob or two,' he reflected, his tongue in his cheek, a little intoxicated, as usual, by his own infernal facility.

"He lit a cigarette, shuffled his manuscript, numbered the pages, and stuffed them into his pocket. The damned thing was done."

And again:—

"Considering her, now, a half-smile touching his lips, it occurred to him that here, in her, he saw his audience in the flesh. This was what his written words did to his readers. His skill held their attention; his persuasive technique, unsuspected, led them where he guided. His cleverness meddled with their intellectual emotions. The more primitive felt it physically, too.

"When he dismissed them at the bottom of the last page they went away about their myriad vocations. But his brand was on their hearts. They were his, these countless listeners whom he had never seen—never would see.

"He checked his agreeable revery. This wouldn't do. He was becoming smug. Reaction brought the inevitable note of alarm. Suppose his audience tired of him. Suppose he lost them. Chastened, he realised what his audience meant to him—these thousands of unknown people whose minds he titivated, whose reason he juggled with and whose heart-strings he yanked, his tongue in his cheek."

And this further on:—

"He went into his room but did not light the lamp. For a long while he sat by the open window looking out into the darkness of Governor's Place.

"It probably was nothing he saw out there that brought to his lips a slight recurrent smile.

"The bad habit of working late at night was growing on this young man. It is a picturesque habit, and one of the most imbecile, because sound work is done only with a normal mind.

"He made himself some coffee. A rush of genius to the head followed stimulation. He had a grand time, revelling with pen and pad and littering the floor with inked sheets unnumbered and still wet. His was a messy genius. His plot-logic held by the grace of God and a hair-line. Even the Leaning Tower of Pisa can be plumbed; and the lead dangled inside Achilles's tendon when one held the string to the medulla of Annan's stories."

Our young man is undergoing a variety of interesting changes:

"Partly experimental, partly sympathetically responsive, always tenderly curious, this young man drifted gratefully through the inevitable episodes to which all young men are heir.

"And something in him always transmuted into ultimate friendship the sentimental chaos, where comedy and tragedy clashed at the crisis.

"The result was professional knowledge. Which, however, he had employed rather ruth-

lessly in his work. For he resolutely cut out all that had been agreeable to the generations which had thriven on the various phases of virtue and its rewards. Beauty he replaced with ugliness; dreary squalor was the setting for crippled body and deformed mind. The heavy twilight of Scandinavian insanity touched his pages where sombre shapes born out of Jewish Russia moved like anachronisms through the unpolluted sunshine of the New World.

"His were essays on the enormous meanness of mankind—meaner conditions, mean minds, mean aspirations, and a little mean horizon to encompass all.

"Out of his theme, patiently, deftly, ingeniously he extracted every atom of that beauty, sanity, inspired imagination which *makes* the imperfect more perfect, creates *better* than the materials permit, *forces* real life actually to assume and *be* what the passionate desire for sanity and beauty demands."

There comes a time when Eris Odell says to Barry Annan:—

" 'I could neither understand nor play such a character as the woman in your last book. . . . Nor could I ever believe in her. . . . Nor in the ugliness of her world—the world you write about, nor in the dreary, hopeless, malformed, starving minds you analyse. . . . My God, Mr. Annan—are there no wholesome brains in the world you write about?' "

I think these citations interesting. I do not feel especially competent to produce from them inferences regarding Mr. Chambers's own attitude toward his work.

Eris will be published early in 1923, following Mr. Chambers's *The Talkers*.

iii

Mr. Chambers was born in Brooklyn, May 26, 1865, the son of William Chambers and Carolyn (Boughton) Chambers. Walter Boughton Chambers, the architect, is his brother. Robert William Chambers was a student in the Julien Academy in Paris from 1886 to 1893. He married, on July 12, 1898, Elsa Vaughn Moler. He first exhibited in the Paris Salon in 1889; he was an illustrator for Life, Truth, Vogue and other magazines. His first book, *In the Quarter*, was published in 1893; and when, in the same year, a collection of stories of Paris called *The King in Yellow* made its appearance, Robert W. Chambers became a name of literary importance.

Curiously enough, among the things persistently remembered about Mr. Chambers to this day is a particular poem in a book of rollicking verse called *With the Band*, which he published in 1895. This cherished—by very many people scattered here and there—poem had to do with Irishmen parading. One stanza will identify it.

"Ses Corporal Madden to Private McFadden:
'Bedad yer a bad 'un!
Now turn out yer toes!
Yer belt is unhookit,
Yer cap is on crookit,
Yer may not be drunk,
But, be jabers, ye look it!
Wan-two!
Wan-two!
Ye monkey-faced divil, I'll jolly ye through!
Wan-two!
Time! Mark!
Ye march like the aigle in Cintheral Park!' "

In the course of writing many books, Chambers has been responsible for one or two shows. He wrote for Ada Rehan, *The Witch of Ellangowan*, a drama produced at Daly's Theatre. His *Iole* was the basis of a delightful musical comedy produced in New York in 1913. He is a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Books
by Robert W. Chambers

IN THE QUARTER
THE KING IN YELLOW
THE RED REPUBLIC
THE KING AND A FEW DUKES
THE MAKER OF MOONS
WITH THE BAND
THE MYSTERY OF CHOICE

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS

LORRAINE
ASHES OF EMPIRE
THE HAUNTS OF MEN
THE CAMBRIC MASK
OUTSIDERS
THE CONSPIRATORS
CARDIGAN
THE MAID-AT-ARMS
OUTDOOR-LAND
THE MAIDS OF PARADISE
ORCHARD-LAND
FOREST LAND
IOLE
THE FIGHTING CHANCE
MOUNTAIN LAND
THE TRACER OF LOST PERSONS
THE TREE OF HEAVEN
THE FIRING LINE
SOME LADIES IN HASTE
THE DANGER MARK
THE SPECIAL MESSENGER
HIDE AND SEEK IN FORESTLAND
THE GREEN MOUSE
AILSA PAIGE
BLUE-BIRD WEATHER
JAPONETTE
THE STREETS OF ASCALON
ADVENTURES OF A MODEST MAN
THE BUSINESS OF LIFE
THE COMMON LAW
THE GAY REBELLION

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

WHO GOES THERE?
THE HIDDEN CHILDREN
ATHALIE
POLICE!!!
THE GIRL PHILIPPA
THE BARBARIANS
THE RESTLESS SEX
THE MOONLIT WAY
IN SECRET
THE CRIMSON TIDE
THE SLAYER OF SOULS
THE LITTLE RED FOOT
THE FLAMING JEWEL
THE TALKERS
ERIS

Sources

on Robert W. Chambers

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Private Information.

Chapter XX

UNIQUITIES

i

EACH of these five is a book which, either from its subject, its authorship, or its handling, is *sui generis*. I call such books "uniquities"; it sounds a little less trite than saying they are unique. I think I will let someone else speak of these books. I will look to see, and will let you see, what others have said about my uniquities.

ii

First we have *Our Navy at War* by Josephus Daniels. W. B. M'Cormick, formerly of the editorial staff of the Army and Navy Journal, reviewing this book for the New York Herald (28 May 1922) said:

"Josephus Daniels always was an optimist about navy affairs while he was Secretary of the Navy from 1913 to 1921, and now that he has told what the navy did during the world war he demonstrates in his narrative that he is a good sport. For in spite of the many and bitter attacks

that were made on him in that troubled time he does not make a single reference to any of them, nor does he wreak any such revenge as he might have done through this medium. In this respect it may be said that truly does he live up to the description of his character set down in the pages of Rear Admiral Bradley A. Fiske's autobiography, namely, that 'Secretary Daniels impressed me as being a Christian gentleman.'

"In its general outlines and in many of its details there is little in Mr. Daniels's story that has not been told before in volumes devoted to single phases of the United States Navy's war operations. For example, his chapter on the extraordinary task of laying the great mine fields, known as the North Sea barrage, from Norway to the Orkneys, is much more fully described in the account written by Captain Reginald R. Belknap; the story of 'Sending Sims to Europe' is also more extensively presented in that officer's book, *The Victory at Sea*, and the same qualification can be applied to the chapter on the fighting of the marines in Belleau Wood and elsewhere, and the work of our destroyers and submarines in European waters.

"But Mr. Daniels's history has one great merit that these other books lack. This is that it tells in its 374 pages the complete story of the work of the navy in the world war, giving so many details and so much precise information about officers and their commands, ships of all classes and just what

they did, the valuable contributions made to the winning of the war by civilians, that it makes a special place for itself, a very special place, in any library or shelf devoted to war books."

iii

Leslie Haden Guest, a surgeon of wide experience and secretary of the British Labour Delegation to Soviet Russia, is the author of *The Struggle for Power in Europe* (*1917–21*), "an outline economic and political survey of the Central States and Russia," of which E. J. C. said in the Boston Evening Transcript (4 March 1922):

"The author writes from personal observation in Russia and discloses much of the life of the day in that country which heretofore has remained undisclosed to the world. He has met and interviewed Lenine and Trotsky themselves, shows us the individuality of these great Bolshevist leaders and tells us much of the life of the people and of the social conditions and tendencies in that distressful country.

"Next he crosses to Poland, another undiscovered country, and shows us the new Poland, its aims and its struggles to emerge from a state almost of anarchy into one of a rational democracy. Very little do we of this country know of the new nation of Tcheko-Slovakia, but Dr. Guest has travelled through it also and shows us the two sections, one cultured, the other more

backward, but both working together to form a modern democratic nation.

"The distressful condition of Austria and the Austrians now suffering for the sins of the Hapsburgs, is next shown forth. Vienna, once the capital of a vast empire and the seat of a great imperial court, was suddenly reduced to the level of the capital of a small agricultural, inland state, a condition productive of great suffering. The conditions here are shown to differ much from those in other countries, for the dismemberment of Austria was not brought about by the act of the Allies, but of their own people. The causes of the suffering are fully explained, as are also the causes of similar conditions in Hungary, in Roumania, in Bulgaria and in other countries affected by the economic and political upheavals following the war. That democracy in Europe will finally triumph Dr. Guest feels certain and he gives lucid reasons for the faith that is in him. He gives a broadly intelligent analysis of the entire situation and finds that the essential conditions of success of a democracy are peace, education and adequate nutrition. But he shows that a great problem exists which must be worked out; and he shows how it must be worked out. Dr. Guest is not alone a thinker, but an observer; not a theorist, but a man of practical understanding, who has studied a problem at first hand and shows it forth simply but comprehensively and with an eye single to the needs of humanity."

iv

Of *Herman Melville: Mariner and Mystic*, by Raymond M. Weaver, Carl Van Vechten, writing in the Literary Review of the New York Evening Post (31 December 1921), said:

"No biography of Melville, no important personal memorandum of the man, was published during his lifetime. It is only now, thirty years after his death and one hundred and two years after his birth, that Raymond M. Weaver's *Herman Melville: Mariner and Mystic* has appeared.

"Under the circumstances, Mr. Weaver may be said to have done his work well. The weakness of the book is due to the conditions controlling its creation. Personal records in any great number do not exist. There are, to be sure, Melville's letters to Hawthorne, published by Julian Hawthorne, in his *Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife*. There are a few references to Melville in the diary of Mrs. Hawthorne and in her letters to her mother. There remain the short account given by J. E. A. Smith, a man with no kind of mental approach to his hero, a few casual memories of Richard Henry Stoddard, whose further testimony would have been invaluable had he been inclined to be more loquacious, and a few more by Dr. Titus Munson Coan and Arthur Stedman; but both these men, perhaps the nearest to Melville in his later years, were agreed that he

ceased to be an artist when he deserted the prescribed field of *Typee* and *Omoo*, and they harassed his last days in their efforts to make him perceive this, much as if an admirer of Verdi's early manner had attempted to persuade the composer that work on 'Aida' and 'Otello' was a waste of time that might much better be occupied in creating another 'Trovatore.' In desperation, Melville refused to be lured into conversation about the South Seas, and whenever the subject was broached he took refuge in quoting Plato. No very competent witnesses, therefore, these. Aside from these sources, long open to an investigator, Mr. Weaver has had the assistance of Mr. Melville's granddaughter, who was not quite ten years old when Melville died, but who has in her possession Mrs. Melville's commonplace book, Melville's diary of two European excursions, and a few letters.

"Generally, however, especially for the most important periods and the most thrilling events in Melville's life, Mr. Weaver has been compelled to depend upon the books the man wrote.

"The book, on the whole, is worthy of its subject. It is written with warmth, subtlety, and considerable humour. Smiles and thoughts lie hidden within many of its pregnant lines. One of the biographer's very strangest suggestions is never made concrete at all, so far as I can discern. The figure of the literary discoverer of the South Seas emerges perhaps a bit vaguely, his head in

the clouds, but there is no reason to believe that Melville's head was anywhere else when he was alive. Hawthorne is at last described pretty accurately and not too flatteringly. *The Scarlet Letter* was published in 1850; *Moby Dick* in 1851. It is one of the eternal ironies that the one should be world-famous while the other is still struggling for even national recognition. There are long passages, well-studied and well-written, dealing with the whaling industry and the early missionaries, which will be extremely helpful to any one who wants a bibliographical background for the ocean and South Sea books. Melville's London notebook is published for the first time and there is a nearly complete reprint of his first known published paper 'Fragments From a Writing Desk,' which appeared in two numbers of The Democratic Press and Lansingburgh Advertiser in 1839 (not 1849, as the bibliography erroneously gives it). Mr. Weaver is probably right in ascribing Melville's retirement from literature to poverty (it was a fortunate year that brought him as much as $100 in royalties and his account at Harper's was usually overdrawn), to complete disillusionment, which made it impossible for him to say more than he had already said, even on the subject of disillusionment, and to ill-health.

"It is a pleasure, moreover, to find that Mr. Weaver has a warm appreciation of *Mardi* and *Pierre*, books which have either been neglected or

fiercely condemned since they first appeared, books which are no longer available save in early editions. They are not equal to *Moby Dick*, but they are infinitely more important and more interesting than *Typee* and *Omoo*, on which the chief fame of the man rests. It is to his credit that Mr. Weaver has perceived this, but a great deal more remains to be said on the subject. *Mardi*, *Moby Dick*, and *Pierre*, as a matter of fact, form a kind of tragic trinity: *Mardi* is a tragedy of the intellect; *Moby Dick*, a tragedy of the spirit, and *Pierre* a tragedy of the flesh. *Mardi* is a tragedy of heaven, *Moby Dick* a tragedy of hell, and *Pierre* a tragedy of the world we live in.

"Considering the difficulties in his path, it may be said that Mr. Weaver has solved his problem successfully. The faults of the book, to a large extent, as I have already pointed out, are not the faults of the author, but the faults of conditions circumscribing his work. At any rate, it can no longer be said that no biography exists of the most brilliant figure in the history of our letters, the author of a book which far surpasses every other work created by an American from *The Scarlet Letter* to *The Golden Bowl*. For *Moby Dick* stands with the great classics of all times, with the tragedies of the Greeks, with *Don Quixote*, with Dante's *Inferno* and with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*."

v

A man who is certainly an authority on naval subjects tells me that *The Grand Fleet* by Viscount Jellicoe of Scapa is the masterpiece of the great war. He does not mean, of course, in a literary sense; but he does most emphatically mean in every other sense. I quote from the review by P. L. J., of Admiral Jellicoe's second book, *The Crisis of the Naval War*. The review appeared in that valuable Annapolis publication, the Proceedings of the United States Naval Institute for April, 1921:

"This interesting book is the complement of his first volume, *The Grand Fleet*, 1914-16. Admiral Jellicoe, the one man who was best situated to know, now draws aside the curtains and reveals to us the efforts made by the Admiralty to overcome the threat made by the German submarine campaign. The account not only deals with the origin ashore of the defence and offence against submarines, but follows to sea the measures adopted where their application and results are shown.

"The first chapter deals at length with the changes made in the admiralty that the organisation might be logical and smooth working to avoid conflict of authority, to have no necessary service neglected, to provide the necessary corps of investigators of new devices, and above all to free the first Sea Lord and his assistants of a mass of de-

tail that their efforts might be concentrated on the larger questions.

"The appendices are of value and interesting because they show the organisation at different periods and emphasise the fact that the Naval Staff at the end of the war was the result of trial and error, natural growth, and at least one radical change adopted during the war.

"Chapters II and III deal with the Submarine Campaign in 1917 and the measures adopted to win success. The gradual naval control of all merchant shipping with its attendant difficulties is clearly shown. The tremendous labour involved in putting into operation new measures; the unremitting search for and development of new antisubmarine devices is revealed, and above all the length of time necessary to put into operation any new device, and this when time is the most precious element, is pointed out.

"That a campaign against the enemy must be waged with every means at hand; that new weapons must be continually sought; that no 'cure-all' by which the enemy may be defeated without fighting can be expected; that during war is the poorest time to provide the material which should be provided during peace, the Admiral shows in a manner not to be gainsaid.

"Chapters IV and V deal with the testing, introduction, and gradual growth of the convoy system. It is shown how the introduction of this system was delayed by lack of vessels to perform

escort duty and why when finally adopted it was so successful because it was not only defensive but offensive in that it meant a fight for a submarine to attack a vessel under convoy.

"Chapter VI is devoted to the entry of the United States. The accurate estimate of our naval strength by both the enemy and the allies, and our inability upon the declaration of war to lend any great assistance are shown—and this at the most critical period for the Allies—a period when the German submarine campaign was at its height, when the tonnage lost monthly by the Allies was far in excess of what can be replaced—when the destruction of merchant shipping if continued at the then present rate would in a few months mean the defeat of the Allies."

vi

I will give you what Admiral Caspar F. Goodrich said in the Weekly Review (30 April 1921; The Weekly Review has since been combined with The Independent) regarding *A History of Sea Power*, by William O. Stevens and Allan Westcott:

"Two professors at the Naval Academy, the one a historian, the other a close student of Mahan, have written a noteworthy volume in their *History of Sea Power*, published in excellent form, generously supplied with maps, illustrations, and index. The title suggests Mahan's

classic which is largely followed in plan and treatment. It will be remembered that his writings covered in detail only the years from 1660 to 1815. While not neglecting this period, this book is particularly valuable for events not within its self-assigned limits. Practically it is a history of naval warfare from ancient times to the present day. Each chapter deals briefly, but ably, with one epoch and closes with an appropriate bibliography for those who care to go more fully into the question; a commendable feature. The last chapter, 'Conclusions,' deserves especial attention. Naturally, considerable space is devoted to the story and analysis of Jellicoe's fight. Few will disagree with the verdict of the authors:

" 'It is no reflection on the personal courage of the Commander-in-Chief that he should be moved by the consideration of saving his ships. The existence of the Grand Fleet was, of course, essential to the Allied cause, and there was a heavy weight of responsibility hanging on its use. But again it is a matter of naval doctrine. Did the British fleet exist merely to maintain a numerical preponderance over its enemy or to crush that enemy—whatever the cost? If the Battle of Jutland receives the stamp of approval as the best that could have been done, then the British or the American officer of the future will know that he is expected primarily to "play safe." But he will never tread the path of Blake, Hawke, or Nelson,

the men who made the traditions of the Service and forged the anchors of the British Empire.'

"One factor in the success of the antisubmarine campaign is not mentioned, important as it proved to be. This was the policy adopted by the Allies of not giving out the news that any U-boat was captured or otherwise accounted for. Confronted with this appalling veil of mystery the morale of the German submarine crews became seriously affected; volunteering for this service gradually ceased; arbitrary detail grew necessary; greatly lessened efficiency resulted.

"The authors are to be congratulated on producing a volume which should be in the hands of all naval officers of the coming generation; on the shelves of all who take interest in the development of history; and of statesmen upon whom may eventually rest the responsibility of heeding or not heeding the teachings of Mahan as here sympathetically and cleverly brought up to date."

Chapter XXI

THE CONFESSIONS OF A WELL-MEANING YOUNG MAN, STEPHEN McKENNA

i

IN a sense, all of Stephen McKenna's writing has been a confession. More than any other novelist now actively at work, this young man bases fiction on biographical and autobiographical material; and when he sits down deliberately to write reminiscences, such as *While I Remember*, the result is merely that, in addition to confessing himself, he confesses others.

He has probably had more opportunity of knowing the social and political life of London from the inside than most novelists of his time. In *While I Remember* he gives his recollections, while his memory is still fresh enough to be vivid, of a generation that closed, for literary if not for political purposes, with the Peace Conference. There is a power of wit and mordant humour and a sufficiency of descriptive power and insight into human character in all his work.

While I Remember is actually a gallery of pictures taken from the life and executed with the

STEPHEN McKENNA

technique of youth by a man still young—pictures of public school and university life, of social London from the death of King Edward to the Armistice, of domestic and foreign politics of the period, of the public services of Great Britain at home and abroad. Though all these are within the circle of Mr. McKenna's narrative, literary London—the London that is more talked about than seen—is the core of his story.

ii

Mr. McKenna's latest novel, *The Confessions of a Well-Meaning Woman*, is a series of monologues addressed by one Lady Ann Spenworth to "a friend of proved discretion." I quote from the London Times of April 6, 1922: "In the course of them Lady Ann Spenworth reveals to us the difficulties besetting a lady of rank. She is compelled to live in a house in Mount street—for how could she ask 'The Princess' to visit her in Bayswater?—and her income of a few thousands, hardly supplemented by her husband's directorships, is depleted by the disbursements needed to keep the name of her only son out of the newspapers while she is obtaining for him the wife and the salary suited to his requirements and capacities. Mr. Stephen McKenna provides us with the same kind of exasperating entertainment that we get at games from watching a skilful and unscrupulous veteran. Her deftness in taking a step

or two forward in the centre and so putting the fast wing off side; her air of sporting acquiescence touched with astonishment when a penalty is given against her for obstruction; her resolution in jumping in to hit a young bowler off his length; the trouble she has with her shoe-lace when her opponent is nervous; the suddenness with which every now and again her usually deliberate second service will follow her first; the slight pucker in her eyebrows when she picks up a hand full of spades; the pluck with which she throws herself on the ball when there is nothing else for it; her dignified bonhomie in the dressing room! We all know Lady Ann and her tricks, but nothing can be proved against her and she continues to play for the best clubs.

"In this story Lady Ann is playing the social game, and it is a tribute to the skill of Mr. McKenna that at the end we hope that the Princess will be sufficiently curious about her new 'frame and setting' to continue her visits. . . . We have used the word 'story' because Lady Ann reports her machinations while they are in progress and we are a little nervous about the issue. Her main service, however, lies in the pictures she draws of her own highly placed relatives and of a number of people who at house parties and elsewhere may help ladies of title to make both ends meet. Chief among them is her son Will, who even as seen through her partial eyes, appears a very dishonest, paltry boy. Her blind devotion to him humanises

both her shrewdness and her selfishness. It is for his sake that she separates her niece from the fine young soldier she is in love with and that she almost succeeds in providing the King's Proctor with the materials for an intervention that would secure to him the estates and title of his fox-hunting uncle. There is always a plain tale to put her down and always the friend of proved discretion is left with the impression that the tale is the invention of malice; at least we suppose she must be, for Lady Ann is allowed by people to whom she has done one injury to remain in a position to do them another. The difficult medium employed by Mr. McKenna entitles him, however, to count on the co-operation of the reader; and it is to be accorded the more readily that to it we owe the felicity of having her own account of the steps she took to prevent an attractive but expensive widow from running away with her husband, and of the party which she gave, according to plan, to the Princess and, not according to plan, to other guests let loose on her by her scapegrace brother-in-law."

iii

Stephen McKenna, the author of *Sonia*, not to be confused with Stephen McKenna, the translator of Poltinus, belongs to the Protestant branch of that royal Catholic sept which has had its home in the County Monagham since the dawn of Irish history. Some members, even, of this branch

have reverted to the old faith since the date of Stephen McKenna's birth in the year 1888 in London.

He was a scholar of Westminster and an exhibitioner of Christ Church, Oxford. After he had taken his degree, his father, Leopold McKenna, an elder brother of the Right Honourable Reginald McKenna, K. C., the last Liberal Chancellor of the British Exchequer, made it possible for him to travel desultorily and to try his luck in the great literary adventure.

On the outbreak of the war, as his health, which is delicate to the point of frailness, debarred him from entering the army, Stephen McKenna first volunteered for service at his old school, and, after a year, joined the staff of the War Trade Intelligence Department, where he did valuable war work for three and a half years. He represented his department on the Right Honourable A. J. Balfour's mission in 1917, to the United States, where he enjoyed himself thoroughly and made himself very popular; and he did not sever his connection with the government service until February, 1919, four months after the conclusion of the armistice.

Stephen McKenna's first three novels—*The Reluctant Lover*, *Sheila Intervenes* and *The Sixth Sense*—were written and published before their author was 27 years of age! But *Sonia*, the story that made him widely known, was written entirely during the period of his activities on the staff of

Westminster School and at the War Trade Intelligence Department. The book won the public favour more quickly than perhaps any other novel that has appeared in our time.

The success of *Sonia* was largely due to its description in a facile, popular and yet eminently chaste and polished style, of the social and political situation in England for a half generation before and during the early stages of the war. This description Stephen McKenna was peculiarly well-equipped to produce, not only as the near relative of a prominent cabinet minister, but also as an assiduous frequenter of the leading Liberal centre, the Reform Club, on the committee of which he had sat, despite his youthful years, since 1915. The political interest, indeed, is revealed in the subtitle, *Between Two Worlds*, which was originally intended for the actual title.

McKenna's next book, *Ninety-Six Hours' Leave*, appealed to the reader's gayer moods and *Midas and Son*, with its tragic history of an Anglo-American multimillionaire, to the reader in serious temper.

In spite of certain blemishes due to Mr. McKenna's unfamiliarity with American life, I should say that *Midas and Son* is probably his ablest work so far. I think it surpasses even *Sonia*. Mr. McKenna returned to Sonia in his novel, *Sonia Married*. His work after that was a trilogy called *The Sensationalists*, three brilliant studies of modern London in the form of succes-

sive novels called *Lady Lilith*, *The Education of Eric Lane* and *The Secret Victory*.

iv

Writing from 11, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, London, in 1920, Mr. McKenna had this to say about his trilogy:

"*Lady Lilith* is the first volume of a trilogy called *The Sensationalists*, three books giving the history for a few years before the war, during and immediately after the war, of a group of sensation-mongers, emotion-hunters or whatever you like to call them, whose principle and practice it was to startle the world by the extravagance of their behaviour, speech, dress and thought and, in the other sense of the word, sensationalism, to live on the excitement of new experiences. Such people have always existed and always will exist, receiving perhaps undue attention from the world that they set out to astonish. You, I am sure, have them in America, as we have them here, and in the luxurious and idle years before the war they had incomparable scope for their search for novelty and their quest for emotion. Some of the characters in *Lady Lilith* have already been seen hovering in the background of *Sonia*, *Midas and Son* and *Sonia Married*, though the principal characters in *Lady Lilith* have not before been painted at full length or in great detail; and these

principal characters will be found in all three books of the trilogy.

"*Lady Lilith*, of course, takes its title from the Talmud, according to which Lilith was Adam's first wife; and as mankind did not taste of the Tree of Knowledge or of death until Eve came to trouble the Garden of Eden, Lilith belongs to a time in which there was neither death nor knowledge of good or evil in the world. She is immortal, unaging and non-moral; her name is given by Valentine Arden, the young novelist who appears in *Sonia* and elsewhere, to Lady Barbara Neave, the principal character in *Lady Lilith* and one of the principal characters in the two succeeding books."

V

In person, Stephen McKenna is tall, with a slender figure, Irish blue eyes, fair hair, regular features and a Dante profile. He has an engaging and very courteous address, a sympathetic manner, a ready but always urbane wit and great conversational charm. He possesses the rare accomplishment of "talking like a book." His intimates are legion; and, apart from these, he knows everyone who "counts" in London society. He is known never to lose his temper; and it is doubtful whether he has ever had cause to lose it.

His one recreation is the Opera; and during the London season his delightful chambers in Lin-

coln's Inn are the almost nightly scene of parties collected then and there from the opera house.

vi

A sample of *The Confessions of a Well-Meaning Woman:*

"Lady Ann (*to a friend of proved discretion*): You have toiled all the way here again? Do you know, I feel I am only beginning to find out who my true friends are? I am much, much better. . . . On Friday I am to be allowed on to the sofa and by the end of next week Dr. Richardson promises to let me go back to Mount Street. Of course I should have liked the operation to take place there—it is one's frame and setting, but, truly honestly, Arthur and I have not been in a position to have any painting or papering done for so long. . . . The surgeon insisted on a nursing home. Apparatus and so on and so forth. . . . Quite between ourselves I fancy that they make a very good thing out of these homes; but I am so thankful to be well again that I would put up with almost any imposition. . . .

"Everything went off too wonderfully. Perhaps you have seen my brother Brackenbury? Or Ruth? Ah, I am sorry; I should have been vastly entertained to hear what they were saying, what they dared say. Ruth did indeed offer to pay the expenses of the operation—the belated prick of conscience!—and it was on the tip of my tongue to say we are not yet dependent on her spasmodic

charity. Also, that I can keep my lips closed about Brackenbury without expecting a—tip? But they know I can't afford to refuse £500. . . . If they, if everybody would only leave one alone! Spied on, whispered about. . . .

"The papers made such an absurd stir! If you are known by name as occupying any little niche, the world waits gaping below. I suppose I ought to be flattered, but for days there were callers, letters, telephone-messages. Like Royalty *in extremis*. . . . And I never pretended that the operation was in any sense critical. . . .

"Do you know, beyond saying that, I would much rather not talk about it? This very modern frankness. . . . Not you, of course! But when a man like my brother-in-law Spenworth strides in here a few hours before the anæsthetic is administered and says 'What is the matter with you? Much ado about nothing, I call it.' . . . That from Arthur's brother to Arthur's wife, when, for all he knew, he might never see her alive again. . . . I prefer just to say that everything went off most satisfactorily and that I hope now to be better than I have been for years. . . ."

Books

by Stephen McKenna

THE RELUCTANT LOVER
SHEILA INTERVENES
THE SIXTH SENSE

WHEN WINTER COMES TO MAIN STREET

SONIA: BETWEEN TWO WORLDS
NINETY-SIX HOURS' LEAVE
MIDAS AND SON
SONIA MARRIED
LADY LILITH
THE EDUCATION OF ERIC LANE
THE SECRET VICTORY
WHILE I REMEMBER
THE CONFESSIONS OF A WELL-MEANING WOMAN

Sources
on Stephen McKenna

Who's Who [In England].
Private Information.

Chapter XXII

POETS AND PLAYWRIGHTS

i

I HAVE to tell about a number of poets and, regarding poets, I agree with a very clever woman I know who declares that poetry is the most personal of the arts and who further says that it is manifestly inadequate to talk about a poet's work without giving a sample of his poetry. So, generally, I shall quote one of the shorter poems or a passage from a longer poem.

John Dos Passos, known for *Three Soldiers* and for *Rosinante to the Road Again*, will be still more variously known to those who read his book of verse, *A Pushcart at the Curb*. This book bears a relation to *Rosinante*, the contents grouping themselves under these general headings:

Winter in Castile
Nights by Bassano
Translations from the Spanish of Antonio Machado
Vagones de Tercera
Quai de la Tournelle
Of Foreign Travel
Phases of the Moon

I will select for quotation the sixth or final poem dedicated to A. K. McC. from the section entitled "Quai de la Tournelle,"

> This is a garden
> where through the russet mist of clustered trees
> and strewn November leaves,
> they crunch with vainglorious heels
> of ancient vermilion
> the dry dead of spent summer's greens,
> and stalk with mincing sceptic steps,
> and sound of snuffboxes snapping
> to the capping of an epigram,
> in fluffy attar-scented wigs . . .
> the exquisite Augustans.

Christopher Morley is too well-known as a poet to require any explicit account in this place. I shall remind you of the pleasure of reading him by quoting the "Song For a Little House" from his book, *The Rocking Horse*, and also a short verse from his *Translations from the Chinese.*

> I'm glad our house is a little house,
> Not too tall nor too wide:
> I'm glad the hovering butterflies
> Feel free to come inside.
>
> Our little house is a friendly house,
> It is not shy or vain;
> It gossips with the talking trees,
> And makes friends with the rain.
>
> And quick leaves cast a shimmer of green,
> Against our whited walls,
> And in the phlox, the courteous bees,
> Are paying duty calls.

But there is a different temper—or, if you like, tempering—to the verse in *Translations from the Chinese*. I quote "A National Frailty":

The American people
Were put into the world
To assist foreign lecturers.
When I visited them
They filled crowded halls
To hear me tell them Great Truths
Which they might as well have read
In their own prophet Thoreau.
They paid me, for this,
Three hundred dollars a night,
And ten of their mandarins
Invited me to visit at Newport.
My agent told me
If I would wear Chinese costume on the platform
It would be five hundred.

In speaking of the late Joyce Kilmer, the temptation is inescapable to quote his "Trees"; after all, it is his best known and best loved poem—in certain moments it is his best poem! But instead, I will desert his volume, *Trees and Other Poems*, and from his other book, *Main Street and Other Poems*, I will quote the first two stanzas of Kilmer's "Houses"—a poem written for his wife:

When you shall die and to the sky
  Serenely, delicately go,
Saint Peter, when he sees you there,
  Will clash his keys and say:

"Now talk to her, Sir Christopher!
  And hurry, Michelangelo!
She wants to play at building,
  And you've got to help her play!"

Every architect will help erect
  A palace on a lawn of cloud,
With rainbow beams and a sunset roof,
  And a level star-tiled floor;
And at your will you may use the skill
  Of this gay angelic crowd,
When a house is made you will throw it down,
  And they'll build you twenty more.

Mrs. Kilmer is the author of two volumes of verse which have sold rather more than John Masefield usually sells—at least, until the publication of *Reynard the Fox*. *Candles That Burn* created her audience and *Vigils* has been that audience's renewed delight. From *Vigils* I take the poem "The Touch of Tears." In it "Michael" is, of course, her own son:

Michael walks in autumn leaves,
  Rustling leaves and fading grasses,
And his little music-box
  Tinkles faintly as he passes.
It's a gay and jaunty tune
  If the hands that play were clever:
Michael plays it like a dirge,
  Moaning on and on forever.

While his happy eyes grow big,
  Big and innocent and soulful,
Wistful, halting little notes
  Rise, unutterably doleful,

Telling of all childish griefs—
  Baffled babies sob forsaken,
Birds fly off and bubbles burst,
  Kittens sleep and will not waken.

Michael, it's the touch of tears.
  Though you sing for very gladness,
Others will not see your mirth;
  They will mourn your fancied sadness.
Though you laugh at them in scorn,
  Show your happy heart for token,
Michael, you'll protest in vain—
  They will swear your heart is broken!

I think I have said elsewhere that J. C. Squire prefers his serious poems to those parodies of which he is such an admitted master. It seems only decent to defer, in this place, to the author's own feeling in the matter. Mr. Squire is the author of *The Birds and Other Poems* and *Poems: Second Series.* My present choice is the beginning and the close of the poem, "Harlequin"—which is in both books:

Moonlit woodland, veils of green,
Caves of empty dark between;
Veils of green from rounded arms
Drooping, that the moonlight charms:
Tranced the trees, grass beneath
Silent. . . .
      Like a stealthy breath,
Mask and wand and silver skin
Sudden enters Harlequin.

Hist! Hist! Watch him go,
Leaping limb and pointing toe,
Slender arms that float and flow,

Curving wand above, below;
Flying, gliding, changing feet;
Onset merging in retreat.

Not a shadow of sound there is
But his motion's gentle hiss,
Till one fluent arm and hand
Suddenly circles, and the wand
Taps a bough far overhead,
"Crack," and then all noise is dead.
For he halts, and for a space
Stands erect with upward face,
Taut and tense to the white
Message of the Moon's light.

. . .

He was listening; he was there;
Flash! he went. To the air
He a waiting ear had bent,
Silent; but before he went
Something somewhere else to seek,
He moved his lips as though to speak.

And we wait, and in vain,
For he will not come again.
Earth, grass, wood, and air,
As we stare, and we stare,
Which that fierce life did hold,
Tired, dim, void, cold.

Milton Raison is a young writer, known especially to readers of The Bookman, whose verse has appeared in various magazines. A Russian, Milton Raison went to sea as a boy—he is scarcely more than a boy now. His first book of verse, *Spindrift*, carries a preface by William McFee. I quote:

"There is a Latin sharpness of mentality manifested in these clearly, sardonically etched portraits of a ship's crew. The whimsical humour revealed in final lines is a portent, in the present writer's opinion, of a talent which will probably come to maturity in a very different field. Indeed it may be, though it is too early to dogmatise, that these poems are but the early efflorescence of a gift for vigorous prose narrative.

"Mr. Milton Raison has settled for himself, with engaging promptitude, that a seafaring career provides the inspiration he craves. The influence of Masefield is strong upon him, and some of his verses are plainly derivative. As already hinted, it is too early to say definitely how this plan will succeed. In his diary, kept while on a voyage to South America, a document remarkable for its descriptive power and a certain crude and virginal candour, one may discover an embryo novelist struggling with the inevitable limitations of youth. But in his simple and naïve poems, whether they give us some bizarre and catastrophic picture of seamen, or depict the charming emotions of a sensitive adolescence, there is a passion for experiment and humility of intellect which promises well enough for a young man in his teens."

I find it particularly difficult to choose a poem for citation from this book. Perhaps I shall do as well as I can, with only space to quote one poem, if I give you "Vision":

Have I forgotten beauty, and the pang
Of sheer delight in perfect visioning?
Have I forgotten how the spirit sang
When shattered breakers sprayed their ocean-tang
To ease the blows with which the great cliffs rang?
Have I forgotten how the fond stars fling
Their naked children to the faery ring
Of some dark pool, and watch them play and sing
In silent silver chords I too could hear?
Or smile to see a starlet shake with fear
Whenever winds disturbed the lake's repose,
Or when in mocking mood they form in rows,
And stare up at their parents—so sedate—
Then break up laughing 'neath a ripple's weight?

It seems as if, *The First Person Singular* having been published, more people now know William Rose Benét as a novelist than as a poet. I cannot help feeling that to be something of a pity. I am not going to quote one of Mr. Benét's poems —indeed all his best work is in quite long and semi-narrative verse—but I will give you what Don Marquis was inspired to write after reading Benét's *Moons of Grandeur*. On looking at it again, I see that Mr. Marquis has quoted eight lines, so you shall have your taste of William Rose Benét, the poet, after all!

"Some day, just to please ourself, we intend to make a compilation of poems that we love best; the ones that we turn to again and again. There will be in the volume the six odes of Keats, Shelley's 'Adonais'; Wordsworth's 'Intimations of Immortality'; Milton's 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Pense-

roso'; William Rose Benét's 'Man Possessed' and very little else.

"We don't 'defend' these poems . . . no doubt they are all of them quite indefensible, in the light of certain special poetic revelations of the last few years . . . and we have no particular theories about them; we merely yield ourself to them, and they transport us; we are careless of reason in the matter, for they cast a spell upon us. We do not mean to say that we are in the category with the person who says: 'I don't know anything about art, but I know what I like'—On the contrary, we know exactly why we like these things, although we don't intend to take the trouble to tell you now.

"William Rose Benét has published another book of poems, *Moons of Grandeur*. Here is a stanza picked up at random—it happens to be the opening stanza of 'Gaspara Stampa'—which shows the lyric quality of the verse:

> "Like flame, like wine, across the still lagoon,
> The colours of the sunset stream.
> Spectral in heaven as climbs the frail veiled moon
> So climbs my dream.
> Out of the heart's eternal torture fire
> No eastern phœnix risen—
> Only the naked soul, spent with desire,
> Bursts its prison.

"Was Benét ever in Italy? No matter . . . he has Italy in him, in his heart and brain. Italy and Egypt and every other country that was ever

warmed by the sun of beauty and shone on by the stars of romance. For the poems in this book are woven of the stuff of sheer romance. There is nothing else in the world as depressing as a romantic poem tnat doesn't 'get there.' And to us, at least, there is nothing as thrilling as the authentic voice of romance, the genuine utterance of the soul that walks in communion with beauty. *Moons of Grandeur* is a ringing bell and a glimmering tapestry and a draught of sparkling wine.

"A certain rich intricacy of pattern distinguishes the physical body of Benét's art; when he chooses he can use words as if they were the jewelled particles of a mosaic; familiar words, with his handling, become 'something rich and strange.' Of the spiritual content of his poems, we can say nothing adequate, because there is not much that can be said of spirit; either it is there and you feel it, and it works upon you, or it is not there. There are very few people writing verse today who have the power to charm us and enchant us and carry us away with them as Benét can. He has found the horse with wings."

The Bookman Anthology of Verse (1922), edited by John Farrar, editor of The Bookman, is an altogether extraordinary anthology to be made up from the poets contributing to a single magazine in eighteen consecutive months. Among those who are represented are: Franklin P. Adams, Karle Wilson Baker, Maxwell Bodenheim, Hilda Conkling, John Dos Passos, Zona Gale, D. H.

Lawrence, Amy Lowell, David Morton, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Siegfried Sassoon, Sara Teasdale, Louis and Jean Starr Untermeyer, and Elinor Wylie.

Mr. Farrar has written short introductions to the example (or examples) of the work of each poet. In his general preface he says:

"Where most anthologies of poetry are collected for the purpose of giving pleasure by means of the verses themselves, I have tried here to give you something of the joy to be found in securing manuscripts, in attempting to understand current poetry by a broadening of taste to match broadening literary tendencies; and, perhaps most important of all, to present you to the poets themselves as I know them by actual meeting or correspondence."

I will choose what Mr. Farrar says about Hilda Conkling, prefacing her poem "Lonely Song"; and then I will quote the poem:

"A shy, but normal little girl, twelve years old now, nine when her first volume of verses appeared, Hilda Conkling is not so much the infant prodigy as a clear proof that the child mind, before the precious spark is destroyed, possesses both vision and the ability to express it in natural and beautiful rhythm. Grace Hazard Conkling, herself a poet, is Hilda's mother. They live at Northampton, Massachusetts, in the academic atmosphere of Smith College where those who know the little girl say that she enjoys sliding

down a cellar stairway quite as much as she does talking of elves and gnomes. She was born in New York State, so that she is distinctly of the East. The rhythms which she uses to express her ideas are the result both of her own moods, which are often crystal-clear in their delicate imagery, and of the fact that from time to time, when she was first able to listen, her mother read aloud to her. In fact, her first poems were made before she, herself, could write them down. The speculation as to what she will do when she grows to womanhood is a common one. Is it important? A childhood filled with beauty is something to have achieved."

Bend low, blue sky,
Touch my forehead;
You look cool . . . bend down . . .

Flow about me in your blueness and coolness,
Be thistledown, be flowers,
Be all the songs I have not yet sung.

Laugh at me, sky!
Put a cap of cloud on my head . . .
Blow it off with your blue winds;
Give me a feeling of your laughter
Beyond cloud and wind!
I need to have you laugh at me
As though you liked me a little.

This has been, as I meant it to be, a wholly serious chapter; but at the end I find I cannot stop without speaking of Keith Preston. No one who

reads the Chicago Daily News fails to know Keith Preston's delightful humour and "needle-tipped satire." And his book, *Splinters*, contains all sorts of good things of which I can give you, alas, only some inadequate (because solitary) sample. Yet, anyway, here is his "Ode to Common Sense":

Spirit or demon, Common Sense!
Seen seldom by us mortals dense,
Come, sprite, inform, inhabit me
And teach me art and poetry.

Teach me to chuckle, sly as you,
At gods that now I truckle to,
To doubt the New Republic's bent,
And jeer each bookish Supplement.

Now, like a thief, you come and flit,
You call so seldom, Mother Wit!
Remember? Once when you stood by
I found a Dreiser novel dry.

One day when I was reading hard—
What? Amy Lowell, godlike bard!
You peeped and then at what you saw
Gave one Gargantuan guffaw.

Spirit or demon, coarse or rude,
(Sometimes I think you must be stewed)
Brute that you are, I love your powers,
But,—drop in after office hours!

Yes, Common Sense, be mine, I ask,
But still respect my critic's task;
Molest me not when I'm employed
With psychics, sex, vers libre, or Freud.

ii

The matter of playwrights is much more difficult than that of poets! A play cannot, as a rule, be satisfactorily quoted from. In the case of a play which is to be staged there are terrible objections (on the part of the producer) to any excerpts at all appearing in advance. The publication of the text of a play is hedged about by all manner of difficulties, copyrights, warnings and solemn notifications. As I write, it is expected that A. H. Woods, the producer of plays, will stage at the Times Square Theatre, New York, probably in September, 1922, the new play by W. Somerset Maugham, *East of Suez*. Pauline Frederick is expected to assume the principal rôle. Mr. Maugham's play will be published when it has been produced, or, if the theatre plans suffer one of those changes to which all theatres are subject, will be published anyhow! Shall we say that the setting is Chinese, and that the characters are Europeans, and that Mr. Maugham has again shown his peculiar skill in the delineation of the white man in contact with an alien civilisation? We shall say so. And—never mind! A sure production of the play for the Fireside Theatre is hereby guaranteed. The Fireside Theatre, blessed institution, has certain merits. The actors are always ideal and the performance always begins on time, as a letter to the New York Times has pointed out.

Arnold Bennett has written a lot of plays; *The Love Match* is merely the latest of them. If I cannot very well quote a scene from *The Love Match*,—on the grounds of length and possible unintelligibility apart from the rest of the drama —I can give you, I think, an idea of the wit of the dialogue:

RUSS (*with calm and disdainful resentment*). You're angry with me now.

NINA (*hurt*). Indeed I'm not. Why should I be angry? Do you suppose I mind who sends you flowers?

RUSS. No, I don't. That's not the reason. You're angry with me because you came in here tonight, after saying positively you wouldn't come, and I didn't happen to be waiting for you.

NINA. Hugh, you're ridiculous.

RUSS. Of course I am. That's not the reason. You took me against my will to that footling hospital ball last night, and I only got three hours' sleep instead of six, and you're angry with me because I yawned after you kissed me.

NINA. You're too utterly absurd!

RUSS. Of course I am. That's not the reason, either. The real reason is (*firmly*) you're angry with me because you clean forgot it was my birthday today. That's why you're angry with me.

NINA. Well, I think you might have reminded me. . . .

NINA. I like sitting on the carpet. (*She re-*

clines at his feet.) I wonder *why* women nowadays are so fond of the floor.

RUSS. Because they're oriental, of course.

NINA. But *I'm* not oriental, Hughie! (*Looking at him with loving passion.*) Am I?

RUSS. That's the Eastern question.

NINA. But you like it, don't you?

RUSS. Every man has a private longing to live in the East.

NINA. But not harems and things?

RUSS. Well—within reason. . . .

NINA. What do you think of me? I'm always dying to know, and I'm never sure.

RUSS. What do you think of *me?*

NINA. I think you're magnificent and terrible and ruthless.

RUSS (*with amicable sincerity*). Oh, no, I'm not. But you are.

NINA. How? When? When was I ruthless last?

RUSS. You're always ruthless in your appetite for life. You want to taste everything, enjoy all the sensations there are. This evening you like intensely to sit very quiet on the floor; but last night you were mad about dancing and eating and drinking. You couldn't be still. Tomorrow night it'll be something else. There's no end to what you want, and what you want tremendously, and what you've jolly well got to have. You aren't a woman. You're a hundred women.

NINA. Oh! Hughie. How well you understand!

RUSS. Yes, don't I?

NINA (*tenderly*). Do I make you very unhappy? Hughie, you mustn't tell me I make you unhappy. I couldn't bear it.

RUSS. Then I won't.

NINA. But do I?

RUSS. Let's say you cause a certain amount of disturbance sometimes.

NINA. But you like me to be as I am, don't you?

RUSS. Yes.

NINA. You wouldn't have me altered?

RUSS. Can't alter a climate.

NINA. You don't know how much I want to be perfect for you.

RUSS. You know my ruthless rule, "The best is good enough; chuck everything else into the street." Have I ever, on any single occasion, chucked you into the street?

NINA. But I want to be more perfect.

RUSS. Why do women always hanker after the impossible?

J. Hartley Manners is the husband of Laurette Taylor and the author of plays in some of which she appears. His drama *The Harp of Life* has as its theme the love of two women, his mother and a courtesan, for a nineteen-year-old boy, and their willing self-sacrifice that he may go forward unbroken and unsmirched. The interesting

thing, aside from the strength of the play and its vivid study of adolescence, is the portrait of the mother. And now his play, *The National Anthem*, which caused so much discussion, is procurable in book form.

Here I have been talking about *East of Suez* and *The Love Match* and have said nothing about *The Circle* or *Milestones!* But I suppose everyone knows that *The Circle* is by Maugham and was markedly successful when it was produced in New York; and surely everyone must know that *Milestones* is by Arnold Bennett and Edward Knoblauch—one of the great plays of the last quarter century. I must take a moment to speak of Sidney Howard's four act play, *Swords*. I think the best thing to do is to give what Kenneth Macgowan, an exceptionally able critic of the drama, said about the play:

"*Swords* is as remarkable a play as America has ever produced. It is a drama of action on a par with *The Jest*, fused with the ecstasy of inspiration and the mysticism of the spirit and the body of woman. It sets Ghibelline and Guelph, Pope and Emperor, two nobles and a dog of the gutters fighting for a lady of strange and extraordinary beauty who is the bride of one noble and the hostage of the other. With the passions, the cruelties, and spiritual vision of the middle ages to build upon *Swords* sweeps upward to a scene of sudden, flashing conflict shot with the mystic and trium-

phant ecstasy which emanates from this glorious woman."

American lovers of the drama have a special interest in the two volumes of *The Plays of Hubert Henry Davies*. At the time of his first success Mr. Davies was working in San Francisco, whither he had come from England. It was Frohman who made him an offer that brought him to New York and began the series of productions which ended only with his death in 1917 in Paris. These two volumes, very beautiful examples of fine bookmaking, contain the successes: *Cousin Kate*, *Captain Drew on Leave*, and *The Mollusc*. Among the other plays included are: *A Single Man*, *Doormats*, *Outcasts*, *Mrs. Gorringe's Necklace*, and *Lady Epping's Lawsuit*. Hugh Walpole has contributed a very touching introduction.

Chapter XXIII

THE BOOKMAN FOUNDATION AND THE BOOKMAN

i

"THANK you very much for the May Bookman," writes Hugh Walpole (June, 1922). "I have been reading The Bookman during the last year and I congratulate Mr. Farrar most strongly upon it. The paper has now a personality unlike any other that I know and it is the least dull of all literary papers! I like especially the more serious articles, the series of sketches of literary personalities seeming especially excellent to me." Mr. Walpole evidently had in mind the feature of The Bookman called "The Literary Spotlight."

"The Bookman is alive. If there is a better quality in the long run for a general literary magazine to try for, I do not know what it is," writes Carl Van Doren, literary editor of The Nation.

"Mr. Farrar has turned The Bookman into a monthly brimming with his own creative enthusi-

asm," says Louis Untermeyer. "It has technically as well as figuratively no rival."

And Irvin S. Cobb declares: "By my way of thinking, it is the most informative, the most entertaining, and incidentally the brightest and most amusing publication devoted to literature and its products that I have ever seen."

ii

The idea of The Bookman Foundation first occurred in a discussion of the future of the magazine and the ampler purposes it was desired to have The Bookman serve. The idea had been advanced that more than the future of the magazine should be considered; those to whom the welfare of the magazine was a most important consideration distinctly felt that welfare to depend upon a healthy and thriving condition of American literature and of American interest in American literature. The broadest possible view, as is so often the case, seemed the only ultimately profitable view. In what way could The Bookman serve the interests of American literature in which it was not already serving them? How could public interest in American literature best be stimulated?

The idea gradually took shape as a form of foundation, naturally to be called The Bookman Foundation, with a double purpose. Fundamentally The Bookman Foundation is being established to stimulate the study of American litera-

ture and its development; more immediately, and as the direct means to that end, the purpose of the Foundation will be to afford a vehicle for the best constructive criticism, spoken and written, on the beginnings and development of our literature. In association with the faculty of English at one of the larger and older American universities, Yale, the Foundation will establish a lectureship; and annually there will be given at Yale a lecture or a course of lectures on American literature by some distinguished writer or critic. It is hoped that, as the Foundation grows, other universities will be brought into co-operation with Yale so that the lectureship may move from centre to centre, stimulating to intelligent self-expression the varied elements that are contributing to our national growth.

The lectures given on The Bookman Foundation will be published in book form by The Bookman in a handsome and uniform edition. Membership in The Bookman Foundation will be by invitation. All members of the Foundation will be entitled to receive the published lectures without charge and they will also have the privilege of subscribing for certain first and limited editions of notable American books. At the present writing, even so much as I have suggested is largely tentative, and I offer it for its essential idea; an executive committee of The Bookman Foundation, in co-operation with an advisory committee, the members of which committees have

yet to be finally determined, will settle all details. By the time of this book's publication or even sooner, I expect a full announcement will have been made; and for the correction of what I have stated I would refer the reader to The Bookman itself.

iii

I am not going to give a historical account of The Bookman here. The magazine is no newcomer among American periodicals. It has a reasonably old and highly honourable history. For long published by the house of Dodd, Mead & Company, it was acquired by George H. Doran Company and placed under the editorial direction of Robert Cortes Holliday. That was the beginning of a new vitality in its pages. Mr. Holliday was succeeded by Mr. Farrar, and now, in its fifty-sixth volume, The Bookman seems to the thousands who read it more interesting than ever before in its history.

The roll call of its past and present contributors includes many of the representative names in contemporary American and English literature. I will give a few:

Joseph Hergesheimer
Amy Lowell
Siegfried Sassoon
James Branch Cabell
Mary Roberts Rinehart
Zona Gale

Fannie Hurst
William McFee
Sherwood Anderson
Hugh Walpole
Frank Swinnerton
Robert Frost
Sara Teasdale
Irvin S. Cobb
Richard Le Gallienne
Donn Byrne
Christopher Morley
Robert Cortes Holliday
Johan Bojer
William Rose Benét
Edgar Lee Masters
Kathleen Norris
Frederick O'Brien
D. H. Lawrence
John Drinkwater
Joseph C. Lincoln
George Jean Nathan
William Allen White
Carl Sandburg
Sinclair Lewis
F. Scott Fitzgerald
Eugene O'Neill
H. L. Mencken
John Dos Passos
Elinor Wylie
Gertrude Atherton
Floyd Dell

iv

Among the American essayists whose work has appeared in The Bookman before its publication in book form is Robert Cortes Holliday; among strikingly successful books that appeared serially in The Bookman was Donald Ogden Stewart's *A Parody Outline of History*. Among The Bookman's regular reviewers are Louis Untermeyer, Wilson Follett, Paul Elmer More, H. L. Mencken, Henry Seidel Canby and Maurice Francis Egan. Among writers of distinction whose short stories have first appeared in The Bookman are William McFee, Sherwood Anderson, Mary Austin, and Johan Bojer; while the intimate personal portraits published under the general title "The Literary Spotlight" have Lytton Stracheyized contemporary American literature. Possibly it is in the department of poetry that The Bookman now shines the brightest (see the account of The Bookman Anthology in the previous chapter); if so, that may be because the editor, John Farrar, is himself a poet.

Probably no other literary magazine in the world exhibits such a degree of personal contact between the editor, his readers, his contributors and the magazine's friends. This note of personal contact is constantly reflected in the magazine's pages; but anyone who has called upon the editor of The Bookman once or twice will know explicitly just what I mean.

EPILOGUE

I have been surprised, on looking back over these chapters, by the variety of the books I have talked about. That so diverse a list should be under a single imprint and should represent, with few exceptions, the publications of a single twelvemonth, seems to me very remarkable. I believe a majority of the books are the production of a single publishing season, the autumn of 1922, and the Doran imprint is but thirteen years old.

"Of the making of books, there is no end"; but of the making of any single book, there must come an end. Yet what is the end of a book but the beginning of new friendships?

THE END

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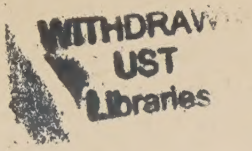

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